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REBEL RELIGION
CHRIST, COMMUNITY AND CHURCH

REBEL RELIGION

Christ, Community and Church

By
B. C. PLOWRIGHT, B.A., B.D.

Introduction by
JOHN MACMURRAY
Grote Professor of Philosophy
University of London



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To M., E. and K.
*Ut quae patri maxime sint
curae cognoscant*

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REBEL RELIGION

AUTHOR'S NOTE

No one is more fully aware than the author that this book is not unlikely to provoke violent disagreement in such places and among such persons where it may chance to be read, and it may easily be butchered to make a critic's holiday. It has had to be written amid the pressure of the ordinary duties of a full charge in the ministry, and how it came to be written and what it seeks to accomplish may be told quite briefly.

It has been the author's custom during the twenty-five years of his ministry to devote a whole year to the study of some particular aspect of Christian doctrine or truth. His method has been to go, first of all, to the New Testament itself and examine particularly the teaching of Jesus on the subject under review, to draw his own conclusions, and only afterwards to study its exposition in the great masters of Christian thought. Some eighteen months ago he took for his subject the Christian doctrine of community, and, during the study, felt driven by the weight of evidence to the position outlined in this book. In particular he came to feel that the assumptions concerning the relationship of the Christian community to the secular, which were commonly held by practically all sections of the Protestant (and indeed of all) communions, could not be substantiated in the teaching of Jesus, and that the social teaching and witness of the Churches, especially where it touched questions of the basic principles of community, were vitiated and obscured by the acceptance of the doctrine of the primacy of political community.

The book has in mind the thoughtful layman rather than any other section of the reading public, and he would simply ask such as may chance to read it to "search the scriptures and see whether these things are so".

The second consideration which prompted him to write the book was the particular stage which Christian social propaganda has now reached. There is a natural history of propaganda as of all movements. The first stage is the arousal of the public conscience that things are wrong; the second, is the definition of the conditions within which the solution of the problem must be found. All this book aspires to do is to state those conditions as they appear in the original message of Jesus. He has left on one side questions of conventional theology, partly because to Him the knowledge of theological truth depends on obedience, partly because the book was written for laymen. The last fact explains also the absence of many references to authorities.

Lastly, the book was written with a deep sense that Communism presents to Christianity an entirely new challenge in the realm of practical action. Neither intellectually nor religiously is the writer a Communist, but as he has studied the development of Communism during the last fifteen years he has been driven to the conclusion that what the Communist seeks to accomplish is largely what the Christian fellowship ought to have been doing long ago, and that the human aims of Communism and Christianity are almost identical.

To Miss M. Woods, of Hermon Hill, for many helpful criticisms; to Mrs. Whiteside, who has generously relieved me of the fatigue of typing the MS., and last of all to my wife for valued help in the preparation of it for the press, I owe a very great debt of gratitude. Without their help the burden of getting the book ready would have been considerably greater.

INTRODUCTION

THERE is a widespread belief abroad, even among Christians, that the very existence of Christianity is threatened at the present day. This is not the case. There never was less danger of the extinction of Christianity than there is to-day. Jesus founded His new community upon solid rock, the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. It is, however, quite possible that all the existing Churches, which are the traditional custodians of Christianity, have nearly served their function and are ripe for dissolution. From the Christian point of view that is a matter of quite subsidiary importance, and speculation on how the transformation will come about is probably quite unprofitable.

What is of first-rate importance is that Christians everywhere, inside and outside the Churches, should be awakened to the necessity of re-examining the implication of their faith in the light of its denial by contemporary movements which are transforming the world. Mr. Plowright's book seems to me to be calculated to hasten this process, and also to indicate how far it has already advanced in the minds of many Christians in this country. If only for this reason, I wish to commend it heartily as a book which is significant, important, and deserving to be widely read and pondered.

The Christian Church had settled down quite nicely and comfortably into the secular world during the nineteenth century. It had, indeed, fallen asleep in the comforting arms of the secular power, and dreamed that Europe, or at least England, was already Christian. The awakening has naturally been rude, and still has about it an air of sleepy panic. But when we are sufficiently awake to think

things over we discover that it was just what we ought to have expected.

Our religion was, from the first, a rebel religion, standing firmly against the whole structure of worldly life, and consistently persecuted in consequence; and our first impulse, as the recovery of the practical significance of our religion proceeds, is to reaffirm the Christian rebellion against the world in the name of the eternal truth about human nature. We begin to offer Christianity again as the solution of the problems of the world, in opposition to secular movements which seek the solution in another direction.

But we soon discover that the problem wears a new face. Other movements, Communism in particular, have taken over our function and rejected us. They propose to establish the universal brotherhood of Man in freedom, equality and justice, without our help. And we find that the part of the world that doesn't want this done welcomes us as allies in the effort to prevent it. We cannot stand with them against the Communist purpose, because it is the Christian purpose. We cannot join the Communist rebels, because they have anticipated this by rejecting Christianity. This is our quandary.

The only ground that is left to us is to accept the Communist purpose, while insisting that the Communists do not know how to accomplish it. We must maintain that we have something essential to contribute to the achievement which Communism lacks, precisely because of its rejection of religion. But it is no use merely saying this. We have to prove it in action. The Communist will ask us, with perfect justice, "How do you propose to do it, and when are you going to start?" At the moment we seem to have no effective reply.

I have a hope that this book will help towards a solution of this question. It will, at least, compel its readers to face

the situation and to understand the urgent need for an answer. In that hope I recommend it to the Christian public.

JOHN MACMURRAY

CHAPTER I

THE DEBACLE

MACAULAYISM is dead. The bland assurance that, measured in terms of national prosperity and individual happiness "every day in every way we were getting better and better" and must inevitably do so, to-day belongs to the curiosities of historic thought, and it has been relegated to the museum of ancient and quaint by-gone beliefs; it is of no more than antiquarian and literary interest on a par with the medieval belief in witches or a heraldic picture of a unicorn. We no longer, in a word, believe in evolution pure and simple, in the inevitability of gradualness; we can discover no inherent necessity in the nature of existence or of the world as a whole, which suggests that it can be summed up in any pat or neat phrase. Our world is in pieces; it has dissolved once more into something like chaos.

The master convictions which for the Victorian bound together all the different aspects of life and made them a unity have broken asunder, and the constituent parts are scattered about in hopeless and disordered confusion. The picture has been cut up into the elementary pieces of a jig-saw puzzle and, at all events for the time being, we cannot discern any possible pattern into which they can be fitted.

It is as though some invisible earthquake in the realm of mind and spirit had shattered our habitations, revealing fissures in what seemed to be solid and unshakable foundations, obliterating the old paths and levelling in ruinous chaos all temples made with human hands. Where once was a plain road, well-trodden and apparently

an enduring highway, at the end of which was the Kingdom of God—a world of righteousness, peace and plenty—there is now an ill-defined track through a jungle, leading one hardly knows whence or whither. Change, transition, movement there has always been, but in our day the slow, steady movement of the river has become the roaring torrent of Niagara; the invisible weathering of the hillside due to normal weather has become a landslide burying most of our accustomed ways of thinking, and altering completely the appearance of the countryside.

In the recent disaster at Quetta, so complete was the upheaval that those who were engaged on the primary efforts at rescue often found themselves unable to say in what street they were working. So it is with us. We can no longer discern the lay-out of our civilization or understand the nature of the life which is the creative force in that civilization. The old plans are lost and we have no new ones as yet to take their place.

How complete that debacle has been will appear if we examine no more than three of the basic and creative ideas of the nineteenth century and which lasted until 1914: (1) The idea of the meaning of life, and (2) the idea of Progress, and (3) the idea of Democracy. Until twenty years ago all these formed part and parcel of the common stock of inherited and unquestioned ideas; they were working assumptions which seemed deducible from not only the facts as contemporary observers saw them, but also from a deep, detached and tranquil reflection on the nature of life itself. To-day, every one of these erstwhile ruling conceptions has been dethroned; there is not one of them that is not seriously questioned, and in particular the belief in reason and the trust in democracy are passionately repudiated. In Germany, Italy, Turkey and Japan, new forms of political organization based upon deep mistrust of reason and democracy and resting in the

last report upon complete confidence upon an appeal to instinct, have already taken their rise and are in being. For many individuals, Shaw's dictum that "Life is just one damned thing after another" exactly hits the mark of their own convictions, and, so far from believing in the inevitability of progress, for multitudes Mr Bertrand Russell's counsel of heroic and unyielding despair in the face of a black, tragic and doomed universe seems to be not only the sanest counsel of wisdom, but also the noblest maxim of morality.

(1) THE IDEA OF THE MEANING OF LIFE AND ITS
BREAKDOWN

The Victorian was quite sure that running through all the kaleidoscopic events of a man's career was a golden thread of purpose which gave to it both unity, significance and purpose. At bottom, man possessed a soul which was in essence immortal; he was the child of eternity and immortality was thrust upon him willy-nilly by his very existence as a man. Whether that eternity was a heaven of bliss or a hell of punishment and pain was a matter which every one decided for himself and depended on the due and right discharge of his duties in this life. These seventy years of mortal existence derived their importance from the fact that in them man's eternal destiny was decided. Temporal existence was only the outer room, the vestibule of life everlasting, and religion was set in the terms of the achievement of immortality. *Life had essentially an otherworldly meaning.*

To-day, all that has gone, partly because of developments within religious thought itself, partly because of the shifting of the centre of interest, partly because of a new method of forming judgment as to what is or is not true.

The main cause of the breakdown of the conviction

was the sheer weight of the moral contradiction involved in the negative side of the theory itself, i.e. the belief in hell. It was in truth a house divided against itself; its conception of God was too glaringly a contradiction of the action attributed to God. It was not simply that man could not conceive of God as inflicting eternal punishment—that might have well have been due to an effeminate strain in modern thought which refuses to look unpleasant facts in the face—the real cause lay deeper.

It was not only the love of God which that side of the doctrine impugned, it was His justice. Men could not attribute to God an injustice of which no man would himself willingly be guilty. No human father would deliberately visit with a life-time's punishment the momentary sin of his child. Compared with eternity, these seventy years of mundane existence are less than the flicker of an eyelid, and men have found it increasingly unthinkable that God would punish a man throughout eternity even though he sinned all his life through. The punishment must fit the crime, and it was precisely because men were driven by their very belief in God to see that the punishment did not fit the crime that they threw over the doctrine of hell, and along with it, what was closely bound up with it, the doctrine of eternal bliss in heaven.

That breaking down of the idea of the spiritual and eternal significance of life was enormously helped by the fact that within religion itself the very conception of God became sentimentalized. Christianity has always officially proclaimed the Holy Fatherhood of God, and it has always found it difficult to hold the noun and adjective together in perfect balance. Victorian thought about God on the whole, and especially towards the end of the period, stressed the Holiness of God and the aloofness of God from life, and from all analogies in human experience dominated popular preaching and thinking. It is not too

much to say that for the majority the Love of God was a kind of make-weight for His Holiness and was called in to solve the problems created by such stress on His Holiness. Love stepped in to redeem men from the awful punishment to which, on the theory, the Holiness of God had condemned them.

In reaction from that Victorian harshness, and, if pushed to an extreme, its illogicality, the early years of the twentieth century stressed the noun and almost forgot the adjective, with the result that the Fatherhood of God degenerated into a mere amiability. We got in popular circles what might almost be described as a "Grandad" theology. Men could do what they wished and God would not be hard on them. He would turn a benevolently blind eye to their escapades and would not deal with them too severely. Sin was regrettable indeed, but still only a venial thing, and it would be lightly visited. The effect upon belief in hell with such doctrine is clear: Hell simply could not be. Sin at all events had no eternal significance.

Two more developments in Christian thought itself strengthened the tendency to destroy the other worldly significance of life. It was increasingly realized that "eternity" and "immortality" both in the teaching of Jesus and in the New Testament, mean much more than an endless duration of existence. They always connote a moral quality. Eternal life, according to Him, is not a form of existence which begins beyond the grave; it has to do not with *quantity* of life, but with *quality* of life, and it is a life which is enjoyed here and now. To put it crudely, yet with perhaps sufficient accuracy to serve our purpose, it was a life stamped by the eternal realities of goodness, beauty and truth. These lent to life their own enduring quality, they made it eternal. "Eternal Life", is, in a word, moral fellowship with God, and men may possess it here and now.

That conception, however, transferred the important scene of action from the world beyond this to this world. It did not indeed set the centre of interest and significance wholly within this present life, but it did withdraw a large share of interest from the next. The latter became almost irrelevant, and seemed, in any case, to be a matter of secondary importance.

But within religion, by far the strongest influence in this transference of attention from the next world to this, and therefore the most potent in destroying the other worldly significance of life, was the re-discovery of what may fairly be called a lost element in the teaching of Jesus. Nineteenth-century religion, was—and twentieth-century religion still is—largely individualistic. It was largely under the dominance of an artificially interpreted Pauline and post-Pauline methods of thought which failed to recognize the whole background of Pauline thinking, i.e. the conception of the Christian fellowship as a new race and the New Israel of God.

Separated from that background, the Epistles could be and were understood in terms of individualistic religion. Great phrases like "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" were interpreted as meaning that Christ came to save individuals only, quite forgetful of the fact that a dominant thought of the Apostle was that the Christian was saved into a new Community. Into that new Community men could only be saved one by one, and that is, of course, eternally true; but where the Christian thinkers lost sight of the conception of the new Israel, they separated in an unreal fashion the method from the end.

From that fatal divorce sprang the individualism of the nineteenth century. The practical pressure of questions of the organization of the social life of Community drove students of the New Testament back from Paul to Jesus,

with the result that from the time of Maurice and Kingsley, Biblical scholarship was largely concerned with re-discovering the authentic portrait and teaching of Jesus himself. It was fidelity to the records themselves which made men realize that our Lord was concerned with much more than individuals, that He was concerned with the Kingdom of God.

The general, growing concentration of interest on social questions during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and the conviction that God had left problems of community to be settled by man's will and effort, made it inevitable that around the conception of the Kingdom should crystallize all the social aspirations of the period, and the twentieth century, therefore, started with a widespread assumption that the task of the Christian was to establish a this-worldly society of righteousness and goodwill. So was completed the first stage of the process which undermined the sense of the otherworldly significance of life. Religion and the moral sense which religion had created made inevitable a shifting of focus from beyond the grave to what was happening on this side of it. Pre- not post-mortem existence, and what could be made of it, became the centre of interest and the determinant of religious interpretations and activity.

Nor was it long before interest was transferred still further from God to man. For all this movement of thought within religion had taken place in a world which, for the first time in history, held out a real promise that man would become master of his own destiny. The amazing achievements of modern science brought ordered knowledge into realms where hitherto there had been only dim, hazy, and confused guesswork, and the new knowledge spelled a new control. Ships that previously were at the mercy of wind and wave, by the use of steam were rendered largely independent of both, and escaped with

case out of situations which at an earlier period would have meant inevitable shipwreck; steam was followed by bewildering discoveries in the realms of biology and physics. Man could immunize his crops where hitherto he had been compelled to let pest and blight work their own sweet will; almost at will, by means of the application of his new discoveries, he could vary the colours and scents of flowers and breed animals of any colour and characteristics he desired. It was, literally, an age of scientific miracles, and almost every day announced some new discovery and pointed to some new control over the conditions of life.

Above everything else, the increasing employment of machinery, at once technically more perfect and run at greater speeds, multiplied indefinitely the economic production of goods which were necessary to satisfy the primary needs of man, so that, so far as Western civilization was concerned, there was no need that a single man, woman, or child should go short of food or clothing. Men might well be forgiven if they drew the inference from the facts around them that the time was not far distant when they might anticipate being completely master in the house of life. This begat a mood of self-confidence which cut at the very roots of the then current interpretation of Christianity.

Under the influence of Schleiermacher and Ritschl Christianity had itself become humanistic and rested in the last resort upon man's sense of dependence and on the things he valued. The sudden promise of material plenty obscured for the time being the deeper values and the more spiritual needs of life, whilst it was clear that man had ceased to be as dependent on God as formerly. It looked as though man could satisfy his own wants, and need trust for the supply of them to nothing more than his own ingenuity and cleverness. The tap roots of religion were

cut. There was no longer both God and man co-operating together in this world; only man, with a capital 'M'.

Nor were there wanting those who assured him that such a judgment was intellectually respectable, and was indeed but the plainest common sense. True, we can see now that the "Naturalism" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was largely of the nature of a "rationalization"—an attempt to justify intellectually a belief which was held on wholly other grounds—but no man and no age is ever conscious of its own rationalization, and it was by many people held that the day of supernatural religion was over. Hitherto we had walked by the dim light of religious faith; henceforth we should walk by the clear light of scientific sight, and, whether the scientist used telescope or radioscope, probe or scalpel, he could find neither God nor soul with his particular instruments and discipline.

We can see now that the very conditions of scientific research, and the object aimed at in it, precluded him from discovering either or both, but at the time, so great was the promise of science that it carried an illicit intellectual prestige, and its writ was supposed to run in realms where, in truth, it had no specific right to speak. So men came to feel that the God whose practical help and co-operation they had ceased to need, was indeed no objective reality at all. He was the Great Illusion—the misinterpretation of reality. So both the practical man and thinker bowed God out of His universe. Dostoievsky had put the point prophetically years before in *The Possessed* when he made Kiriloff say, "If there is no God, then I, Kiriloff, am God." Man himself took on the functions of God. He would be architect of his own fortunes, arbiter of his own destiny. "Master of his fate and captain of his soul" he would build, not indeed a City of God, but a City of Humanity. He would abandon faith; he would keep close

to "facts", and if he did these things science would automatically give him a machine-made, neat and trim community.

Suddenly the bomb fell, and the easy comedy was transformed in a flash into grim and stark tragedy. For four years, blood, lust, lying, disease, torture, and undiscerning death was let loose on Western Civilization. There was neither rhyme, reason, nor moral desert to be discovered in the way in which agony and death suddenly singled men out as their victims. They fell as indiscriminately on the best as on the worst, on the bravest as on the basest. Poet, artist, thinker, prophet, all alike were swept under by this Niagara of malevolence. Neither a man's goodness nor his courage nor his worth to the world could save him. Moloch devoured his victims regardless of quality. Everyman was butchered to make a holiday for Mars. Is there any wonder that a generation which had been taught to form its judgment on "Facts" should declare that it could see no meaning at all in the fundamental process in the Universe? that life had no meaning at all?

More, man's experience in the War was confirmed by his post-war experience. To more than anything else he had trusted for prosperity and happiness to the industrial machine, and quite unexpectedly that industrial machine, of which he had been so proud, caught him in its toils and crushed him.

The very process of technological improvement in industry made man less indispensable for the working of those machines, and fewer and fewer people were able to buy the goods which the machines produced. Precisely because the cupboards were full, men were starved. Human unemployment and an unparalleled capacity for production were both parts of one and the same picture, aspects of one process. Industry was the supreme example of self-stultification: it was not merely a robot, but a Fran-

kenstein robot which crushed the very men who made it.

Man's disillusionment was complete. He was the sport the plaything of the deviltry in things, a half-crushed fly on the huge, relentless and irresistible fly-wheel of existence. With the best intention in the world, and precisely because he had made the completest use of one of the highest faculties within him—reason—he had made a sorry mess of things. So the fatalism of the War period was reinforced by the futilism of the post-war years. The Rake's Progress was complete. Man had begun by denying the reality of the otherworldly, then he had gone on to deny God, and last of all he had been compelled to deny himself.

Two counsels, and two alone, were open to him. The spiritual aristocrat might summon up all his reserves of courage, and bid defiance to a demonic world and refuse to strike his colours, or men of common clay might say quite simply, "*Carpe diem.*" "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." The mood was not indeed clearly thought out; it was rather, dimly, deeply and only half-consciously felt, but there can be no doubt but that it is the dominant mood of the modern world in Western Europe.

He is weary of all delights,
With a trustless joy
He is won with a world of despair
And is lost with a toy.

Those words, in which Sir Walter Raleigh gave voice to the mood of disillusionment felt by many after the breathless and spacious days of Elizabeth, exactly hit the mark of the modern mind.

(2) THE BREAKDOWN OF THE IDEA OF PROGRESS

In nothing did the Victorian era believe more than in the inevitability of progress, and if one confined his

attention to that section of history in which the Victorian lived, it was amply warranted. We need do no more than recall the facts which we have already noted: the steady rise in the standard of life, the increase of material wealth, the enormous multiplication of instruments of pleasure and satisfaction. All these were patent to the eye of the most superficial critic.

Moreover, the Victorian believed that an easy way to world-wide community lay open. The economic expansion of Western Civilization bound every nation to each other in reciprocal self-interest. Nations would keep the peace because it was the plainest part of common sense and wisdom to do so. War was not so much a crime as a folly—a sin against enlightened self-regard. Economic internationalism would bring political internationalism and could not help doing so. World peace was only another name for world trade, taken a little lower downstream.

So argued the Victorian, and indeed, he could hardly argue in any other way. First of all Lamarck, and afterwards Darwin, wrote the magic word 'Evolution' over all life, and the idea in an illicit and unscientific form captured the mind of the time. Strictly speaking, the word 'Evolution' has nothing necessarily to do with progress; all that it asserts is the reality of change according to the response of the organism to its environment. Degradation and deterioration are as much the products of "Evolution" as development and advance, and the downward trend of some forms of life is as directly due to it as is the upward trend manifest in other forms. Yet the optimistic mood of the nineteenth century created by its vast triumphs in the world of invention and scientific discovery fastened on the brighter aspects of the evolutionary process as being characteristic of it, and so the idea of biological evolution was transformed into the idea of automatic pro-

gress. At the heart of things there was a beneficent power—all too easily equated with the devitalized idea of the Fatherhood of God of which we have spoken—which had pre-ordained that knowledge, power, and happiness should “grow from more to more”.

All that conception of progress depended, however, on one single, and, as we now know, an amazingly flimsy assumption, to wit, that man was an essentially rational animal and that he would always act in accordance with the prescription of cool judgment and common sense. In any course of action he would ponder in a detached and impartial manner the facts before him, would come to a carefully reflected-on decision and would act accordingly. *Homo sapiens* could be trusted to do nothing rash and impulsive. It was clear that if anything happened to destroy that belief in the predominantly rational nature of man, it would undercut the whole theory of progress and bring it crashing to the ground.

That was, in fact, what happened. Rough, rude, and bloody happenings in the world of affairs joined hands with the new knowledge about man and the new interpretation of history to convince the modern generation that to hope that man would always act rationally was to live in a fool's paradise. It became clear that it was one thing to say that man was rational and another to say that he would always be reasonable. From a scientific point of view it might be true to say that the distinguishing mark of man was reason; it was an entirely illicit deduction to say that in practice his reason was in complete control of the instincts and impulses from which it had sprung. Reason might have its dwelling in man, and in man alone, but that provided no warrant for saying that the tenant was master in the House of the Soul.

It is precisely this recognition of the insecurity of tenure by reason which has been forced on the modern man. The

War could not fail to convince the generation which passed through it that reason's throne in man was but shaky and tottering at the best and was easily upset in time of crisis, for the conduct of modern war spells the apotheosis of instinct and impulse, and can only be carried on by the wholesale harnessing of instincts to its chariot wheels. Pride, lust, cruelty, savagery, sadism, deliberate lying, and deceit—without these war cannot be carried on. All these depend upon the appeal to the instinctive side of man's life, and not merely upon the "natural" expression of instinct, but upon its deliberate training and cultivation. The War awakened primitive man to life once more, and set that primitive man to work the instruments of death which reason and intelligence had provided. What had seemed to the Victorian to be the normal relations between reason and instinct, with reason in control of instinct, were turned topsy-turvy: for more than four years and in a highly charged emotional atmosphere which could not but intensify the impression, the achievements of reason were the servants of instinct.

And increasingly, in post-war years, we have seen that the Treaty of Versailles itself was made by men temporarily so obsessed by the crude instincts of revenge and reprisal that they could not discern rightly either the signs of the times or even the political realities of the situation to be dealt with.

Small wonder that the belief in the essentially and predominantly rational nature of man did not survive, and that the sugar-and-spice-and-all-that's-nice theory of humanity perished. It was blown to bits by the guns and stifled by poison gas.

Side by side with that practical experience, and playing into its hands, the New Psychology made rapid strides. Science, which had discovered law and order in the facts and events of the external world of physics and biology,

turned its attention to the inner human world of mind and spirit, and its first generalizations confirmed convictions already arrived at in the stress of war. The insecurity of the dominion of reason to which the events of 1914-18 pointed, was corroborated by the method of patient investigation; the amassing of facts, and the framing of hypotheses all pointed in one direction. Man possessed reason, it was true, but reason did not possess him; the greater part of the human mind was composed of deep, instinctive unconscious forces, partly racial, partly individual, and these dominated mental activity. The function of reason was confined to a small area of relatively unimportant decisions. The major decisions of life were made at the bidding of the unconscious.

For Freud, the unconscious was largely made up of the sex impulse; for Adler, of the instinct for self-assertion and self-preservation; for Jung, of an instinctive drive, the libido, which might take one of many protean forms.

Yet various and incompatible as these separate interpretations might be, they all agreed in this that in the greater and more important parts of human activity the dominant rôle was not played by reflective reason, but by instinct. Theory and investigation did but confirm what experience had pointed to, to wit, that reason was little more than the obedient servant of hidden instincts. It was but a puppet king which ruled only just so long as the real powers behind the throne, the instincts, suffered it to do so. It might wear the garb of Esau, but its voice was the unmistakable voice of Jacob; it spoke but rarely on its own authority and in its own person.

So perished the idea of the rationality of man, and with it crumbled the main prop of the idea of progress. To complete the ruin, a new interpretation of history lent its aid. According to this view, powerfully advocated by Spengler and chiming in with both fatalistic and cyclic views of

life derived from the East, the idea of progress was based on observation of too narrow and restricted a range of facts. If, instead of having regard merely to the history of our own civilization we kept in mind the story of the successive civilizations of history, we should discern a similar life pattern in them all. Like the individual human being they had their periods of birth, infancy, youth, and maturity; and, too, like human beings, they had their invariable decline and death. The same graph of history would do for every civilization—a slow, steady rise, a quick flowering, and then a speedy and precipitous fall into oblivion. The same characteristics marked similar periods in every civilization that had been; the moulds were never broken, and from them history took its form. For inevitable progress the new history substituted the idea of cyclic development. The civilizations were only successive whorls in the stream of time. History went round and round in a giddy circle, biting its own tail. Standing at our own point in the history of our own civilization, it did appear as if we could discern progress, but in truth, not only we ourselves would pass into the void, but our civilization would perish as though it had never been. Progress was the second great illusion.

And if the War and Psychology between them slew the idea of progress, and the new history interred it, earth was heaped upon its coffin and it was buried out of sight by that post-war experience of the futility which seems inherent in the working of the industrial machine. Paradoxically, as we have seen, the age of plenty was an age of scarcity; the dialectical development of the economic process brought the wheels of industry to a standstill. It looked as if there was a term, a limit fixed beyond which man's ingenuity could not carry him, as if the way was barred and had ended in a cul-de-sac.

Like many a modern tramper he had taken the path

which seemed to offer a pleasant and easy track, only to find himself served with the notice: "NO ROAD THIS WAY". By-Path Meadow had not led onward to the Kingdom of God, but to the Castle of Giant Despair. It was that sense of exasperation at the impasse to which life had brought modern man which was largely responsible for:

(3) THE BREAKDOWN OF THE IDEA OF DEMOCRACY

The Victorian was persuaded that in political democracy he had found the final and perfect form of the political organization of the community, and so far as Britain was concerned, it was regarded as a Heaven-sent automatic cure for any ills from which the community might suffer. It was a nostrum which could be applied ready made to all sorts of communities at all stages of their development. The ballot, and in the long run universal suffrage, were the infallible cure-all of all social ills.

What the Victorian forgot was the reality of the texture of society, and that it was impossible to separate as sharply as he did the economic and the political elements in it. But man is a political animal, only rarely and on occasion he is *homo-economicus* all the time. Only once in three, four, or five years does the specifically political issue come sharply and predominantly to the front on such occasions as when he chooses his representatives in Parliament; the economic issue is with him all the time, and it affects the whole of his life. The kind of home he can make, the kind of food he can eat, the very kind of bed on which he lies at night, and a score of subtler and more specifically spiritual issues hang and turn upon it. From it derive his opportunities in life and the possibility of satisfaction and culture; above all, it determines the measure and reality of his freedom. If he is bondsman there, the greater part of his waking life is spent in chains.

It was inevitable, therefore, that increasingly he should view politics in the context of his economic situation, and that the value of political institutions should come to be measured in his eyes by the extent to which they helped or hindered his own economic security, justice, and opportunity.

Nor would it be fair to leave out of account the fact that he was moved by much more than individual self-regard. The closing years of the last century saw an amazing development of a real sense of fellowship between all who were servants of the economic machine. What the artisan wanted for himself, he wanted for his fellows. That sense of belonging to a group added its own emotional intensity to his primary demands upon politics and politicians, and transformed it from a keen individual desire to a class passion.

Yet when faced with a grave economic crisis, e.g. unemployment, the political machine proved almost completely inadequate. It could provide neither opportunity, security, or justice; it found itself unable to work save within the framework of the existing political maxims and economic institutions. Political vision was lacking, with the result that whilst we had political tinkers in plenty who could tinker with and patch up the existing order of things, true statesmen who possessed either the moral courage or the political insight to see the essential nature of the crisis, were almost entirely wanting. The logic of the average man was simple; if political democracy could not provide what he asked from it, then political democracy was useless.

Hence arose a general suspicion of the parliamentary institutions of democracy, and that suspicion was strengthened by a widespread conviction that the dominant groups in economic life were also the dominant group in politics. It was possible to suggest that the parliamentary machine was more concerned for the welfare of large industrial

interests than for specifically human needs, and that profit counted far more than persons.

From another angle, "Big Business" was in many quarters suspicious of parliamentary democracy. Outside Parliament the rise of strong Trade Unions able to exert very large economic pressure, and inside Parliament a steady growth of the Labour Party seemed to indicate that the time was fast approaching when the owning class would be caught between the upper and nether millstones of the economic and political forces of Labour. If the present economic organization of society was to continue, then the power of organized Labour must be broken, and the whole artisan classes subjected to a new discipline. A powerful group of employers during the War openly avowed that such must be the main direction of employer policy after the War. But parliamentary democracy stood in the way and, therefore, new forms of autocratic and authoritarian conceptions of government found no small favour in the eyes of many people.

On the Continent, Fascism and Nazi-ism embodied that conception in practical politics, whilst Communism represented a successful attempt to undercut economic autocracy on the part of the dispossessed.

Once more, the practical considerations pointing away from democracy were reinforced by what we have already noted—the flight from reason. The assumption of democracy is that men will use their vote rationally, but if men are not rational, and are driven by instinct, then clearly democracy was impossible. The only alternative left was to create a political institution and organize political life on the basis of the a-moral instincts.

Such is the picture of our modern world—its economic life patched, but disorganized and in the last state of repair, its political organization in the melting-pot, its spiritual foundations sapped and undermined. Never, in all proba-

bility, has any generation experienced such drastic disturbances in its life, or been compelled to adjust itself to them so swiftly as has ours; never was the ruin so complete. Yet in the very completeness of that ruin lies our hope. We are no longer bound to follow the old lines: as few generations have had it, we have the opportunity to build as we will. We are living in one of the greatest creative epochs of history, and what is certain is that for many generations to come civilization will keep the main outline and bear the stamp we set upon it. For good or for evil, life has become plastic and fluid once more, and we are making the mould into which it is being run.

CHAPTER II

"TOWER OF BABEL"

IN only a comparatively small number of people did the revolutionary conceptions of life we have been considering in the last chapter come to clear consciousness, and in only a still smaller number were they clearly held together at one and the same time in such wise that they became a philosophy of life; for the average man they remained occasional suggestions arising out of a particular set of experiences. They were felt impressions rather than deliberately thought-out convictions; nevertheless they left their mark and entered into the dim background of the consciousness of many men. They only awaited the occasion which should project them into the foreground.

We must indeed sharply distinguish the occasions which have given rise to the movements from their philosophical interpretation. Only in one case, that of the Communist Revolution, was the direction of the movement from its first seizure of power to the present moment determined by a philosophy of life clearly thought out beforehand. The great Fascist or Nazi experiments wear the appearance of movements which were sure only of their aims and methods, and which brought in a philosophy to justify them only after the event. Their philosophy, in a word, is largely an *apologia* for the deed, an afterthought designed to give intellectual respectability and propagative power to a *de facto* situation. It was meant, not to supply a reason for the faith which was in them, but to justify the fact they had established. To put it in psychological terms, it was at bottom a rationalization born of the need to vindicate themselves.

The point to be noticed is that they found the materials ready to hand in what lay in the background of the modern mind. Not until the practical need arose could that dimly apprehended and but half-conscious conviction, or set of convictions, become of primary significance and become charged with explosive power. If a situation developed which was highly charged with emotional content, and to which the conventional and consciously dominant economic and political ideas did not seem relevant, or which they could not illuminate or handle, it was almost inevitable that hitherto neglected motives, ideas, and experiences would take command of the situation. And by a kind of law of polarity in the human mind, it would be to convictions precisely opposite to those which had hitherto dominated thought, to which men would turn. Reason would be replaced by instinct, democracy by autocracy, the spiritual by the material. But these contrary convictions were, as we have seen, already in the background of the minds of many men, and when the actual necessary situation occurred, these provided at once the driving force, and afterwards the justification of what transpired.

The need of vast numbers of individuals and of whole classes and nations became acute to the point of the required emotional intensity, and in the resulting explosion the ancient ways of political life were shattered, and strange—to our unaccustomed eyes—bizarre new forms of political and economic organization of community took their place. Almost overnight a new human Tower of Babel was built. It is clear that the situation we have described in the previous chapter, if it took the form of an acute economic and political crisis, admitted of two opposite solutions. If there were a grave breakdown in economic organization, or if the democratic control of political machinery developed so far as to threaten those

who were in possession of economic power, then a clash between the "Haves" and the "Have Nots" would be inevitable, and either group might gain the ascendancy. But such ascendancy would have to reckon with what would normally be important and powerful minorities, and therefore such ascendancy could only be maintained by coercion. It followed, therefore, that any new forms of political life would be authoritarian in character, and that the final power might be wielded by either party. The two mutually exclusive alternatives were either complete control by the proletariat or complete domination by the industrialist aristocracy.

In any case, the demise of democracy was certain and inevitable. The crisis developed first in Russia; a desperate economic situation involving millions in hunger and famine due to mismanagement of the War, joined with disillusionment and despair, provided the occasion, and the Bolsheviks seized power. They met the armed resistance of the owning and court classes with ruthless energy and cruelty, though it should never be forgotten that the first blood in the Russian Revolution was shed by the anti-Revolutionary Parties. In discussing the new forms of community life and organization, we have therefore to begin with *Communism*, with the proviso that we remember that Communism still remains rather the goal than an actual reality. What we are presented with in Russia at the present time is not Communism but a State Socialism, which is being shaped and consciously directed by Communist ideals, policies and plans. The present régime with the enormous power it vests in the State is regarded as being only a stage to the completely communized society in which the State as we know it will have disappeared.

With the actual details of the organization and achievements of Russia we are not here concerned—they can be found in one of a score of text-books. The point of our

inquiry has to do with the working assumptions of Communism. What then are the main strands which, woven together, have produced a society of a wholly new pattern? There is large agreement that these are three in number—economic determinism, dialectical materialism, and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

ECONOMIC DETERMINISM

The thesis from which Communism starts is that our so-called freedom to think is largely illusory, and that it is in fact determined for us by the realities of our economic life. The human mind works differently at different stages of industrial development. Its desires, and therefore its thoughts, and the actions by which it seeks to satisfy those desires and make those thoughts concrete, are one thing in a hunting community, a second thing in an agricultural, a third thing under the Medieval Guild system, and a fourth and entirely different thing in a machinery-capitalist age. A shepherd, a hand craftsman, or a worker with machines—each thinks in a different way from the rest—and must do. The capitalist-owner, just because he is a capitalist-owner, thinks in directly contrary terms to that of the artisan-labourer precisely because the two have different functions in industry, and therefore, apart from the clash of economic interests between the two, they must of necessity be in conflict. That is indeed the final determinant and division of human thought: as a man possesses, or does not, so thinks he. The moral system at any given time may seem to be the result of ethical thinking and religious judgment, but in truth it is but the reflection and creation of the current economic order. Social customs—marriage, the use of leisure, the legal system, the social services provided by the State, education and even literature and art themselves are de-

terminated not by what man would like to do, nor even by what the State thinks it desires to do. The power behind all seeming thrones, the piper who calls the tune to which all dance, whether they be governors or governed, is the current economic régime.

Work determines mind and therefore character, therefore politics, therefore the nature of the State itself. The economic realities of a given period exert an unrecognized but irresistible pressure on us: they form a prison from which none can escape, even though a man believes himself on occasion to be thinking and acting in a wholly unforced manner. But cut deep enough into any apparently free decision and you will find at the heart of it, the economic system—in our day, mechanistic capitalism. So runs the Communist thesis, but taken by itself, it obviously suffers from one fatal defect. If that were all, then how could development of the economic organization of community be possible? Would it not have remained static at a low level, say the hunting, pastoral, or agricultural stage of community.

The escape from that conclusion is provided by the Marxian doctrine of *Dialectical Materialism*. The starting-point of this interpretation of history is that the ultimate reality of all existence and the substance underlying all things is matter. The Communist agrees with Tyndall that “ in matter is the promise and potency of all life ”. But this matter is not inert and static; it has an energy of its own, and is forced by its own nature to assume constantly changing and developing forms. Hence from it come on the one hand all the spiritual and mental traits of human personality. Thought, music, art, and conscience are all its offspring. It is therefore untrue to say—as is often said—that Communism confines its attentions only to the material and economic, the bread-and-butter side of human life. For the Communist, the

cultural expression of personality is as important as any other, and devotion to art, especially to dramatic art, is one of the outstanding characteristics of the Soviet Republic. The material elements which go to make up life are its indispensable basis, but not the totality of life; they have, somehow, by some mysterious law of matter itself, given birth to spirit. Matter itself is dynamic.

When this theory is applied to the history of economic organization, a clear pattern emerges. Economic evolution takes place by stages culminating in a crisis which demands revolution. For every period of slow evolution not only develops its own principle of development more completely, but at the same time it develops the conditions which make for its own overthrow. When these conditions have sufficiently developed, the system becomes, as it were, topheavy, and inevitably compasses its own downfall. A crisis occurs, probably both economic and political, and usually accompanied by violence, and there gradually emerges an order which combines in a new synthesis the characteristic elements of the old order and the contradictory elements which, against its will, but by the compulsion of the natural order itself, it had fostered.

Two examples will make it clear. It was Feudalism itself which in the Middle Ages was responsible for the growth of the market towns and cities which afterwards destroyed the Feudal System itself. An even clearer case is seen in the Industrial Revolution which has been taking place during the last hundred and fifty years. The capitalist régime—it can hardly be called a “system”—itself created the conditions of its own overthrow. There was indeed capitalism before the Industrial Revolution, but capitalism only became characteristic of and dominant in industry with the advent of the power-machine. The coming of steam changed the face of industry—and its destiny. So long as weaving, etc., were carried on

mainly in the cottages of the weavers, combination amongst them was difficult. When it did take place it was usually only under the stress of an immediate and unusually severe threat to their livelihood, and the temporary association tended to break up again as soon as the immediate object was achieved, or clearly failed of accomplishment. But the new machines of the Industrial Revolution could only be purchased by capitalists to begin with, and their economic and profitable working demanded that they and those who were to work them, be massed together under one roof. Hence arose the factory system, and industry was transferred thither from the cottage. The artisan was now no longer an individual and independent worker in the comparative isolation of his own home. He was one of a score, fifty, a hundred, perhaps more, working in the same building under the same discipline. The combination which had been difficult, if not impossible before, now became possible, and after a generation of fierce struggle by the men and even fiercer resistance by the owning class, the right of the workers to combine in defence of their interests was won.

More, the new machinery demanded much more intelligent handling than the old, and consequently it was in the interest of the capitalist class to give the workers education. The power to read and write enormously increased the range of thought and the effectiveness of the combination of the workers, and the new instrument expressly forged to serve machine capitalism was soon employed first to criticize and then to challenge it.

To sum it all up, against its own ultimate interests but for its own immediate ends capitalism created a strong and intelligent class consciousness amongst the workers who found themselves dispossessed of any of the means of livelihood save their own strength, intelligence and combined numbers. The time must inevitably arrive

when the evolution of mechanical capitalism—the second stage of which was the elimination of private competition by trusts and cartels—would arrive at the point where huge international combines of capital cut right across national political frontiers. At the same time production would outrun purchasing power. The very machines which multiplied goods and made them cheap would displace men from employment so that they could not buy the products of the machines, and the whole economic process would thus be brought to a standstill. Meanwhile, the answer to transnational capitalism would be transnational labour. That situation of poverty amidst plenty combined with class-conscious labour could only result in a crisis of first-class magnitude. In the name of dispossessed labour, the Communist would seize power and the proletariat would take possession in its own interest of the mass production machinery and methods created by the capitalist classes. The Communist would, as it were, cut through the crisis.

Such a complete transfer of power from the many to the few, from the industrial autocrat to the plutocrat, could not be expected to take place without resistance, but it was better that the owning class, comparatively small in numbers, should be “liquidated” rather than that generations of workers to come should continue to suffer from the harshness of the system. That crisis has arrived in our own day, and what we are witnessing in Russia is the literal fulfilment of the dialectical philosophy and forecast. The situation was expedited by the War and by the dislocation of the economic life of the world caused by the War.

The War, however, did little more than speed up a process which was already taking place and whose issue was certain. The ratio of productive power to consumptive capacity increased rapidly, and even if there had been

no war, the time could not have been indefinitely delayed when machines would produce goods faster than men could buy them and the whole economic activity of life come to a gradual or a sudden stop. The only particular in which the Communist forecast was wrong was that the inevitable revolution did not take place in the countries which, on the theory, were ripest for it, but in a country which was largely agricultural though containing enormous possibilities of industrial development.

The great experiment goes forward. The proletariat is using all the mass methods of production made possible by the capitalist régime and he is using them to enrich not a few entrepreneurs, but the vast mass of ordinary folk. And, according to Communist theory when the proletariat has gained complete control of productive enterprise, there will be reached the final stage of industrial development. This brings us to the third main element of Communist thought—the idea of the

DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

This was not only the final form of the evolution of industrial organization according to Marx; it was its right and legitimate form. Marx accepted the current form of wages theory prevalent in his day, i.e. Ricardo's *Iron Law of Wages*, according to which the wages of the workers would automatically fix themselves under a capitalistic régime at the level of bare subsistence; they would never provide more than was sufficient to keep body and soul together to maintain the worker as an effective economic tool. Yet, according to the Marxian theory, it was labour alone which produced economic value and worth, and therefore the economic profits of capitalists really represented robbery of the workers. Since capital was the result of the saving of profits, both

the profits themselves and the capital which accrued from them was, by justice and right, the real property of the workers, who therefore should both own and control it. This meant the control of industry and economic organization, and since economic organization was the determining factor in the cultural life of individuals and in the nature and quality of the State, it meant the control of the whole of the community life by the proletariat. It would be "Government of the people, by the people, for the people" in a completer sense than Abraham Lincoln ever dreamed of. The important and ruling consideration of all policy, both economic and political, should be the welfare of the proletariat, which alone created the wealth of the community and was by far the largest class in it.

Such a doctrine had large consequences. The exaltation of the economic sphere of action above the more strictly political, meant that the importance of political nationality was enormously diminished. Race and blood were to count for less than a man's specific function in industry. The vertical barriers between nation and nation were of less account than the horizontal barriers between class and class, i.e. between Capitalist and Proletarian. The important question to ask about men was not as to their nationality: British, French, German, or Russian, but whether they were workers or not. The interest of the workers the world over was the same, and the attempt to foster and cultivate patriotism was only an effort to obscure that real issue. Hence Communism is essentially transnational in character and is essentially a missionary faith. It carries in its hand what it honestly believes to be a gospel of liberation for a whole world of workers in bondage.

Yet Communism is insistent in holding squarely the balance between the individual and the community. True, under the transitional stage of State Socialism the individual must often be coerced by the State whose guiding

principle is that " If a man will not work, neither shall he eat ", but this transitional period is significant only from two points of view. It is inevitable as a " carry-over " from the capitalistic order of society, but even more important, it provides an opportunity for the training and development of the new mentality necessary for carrying on a Communist order of society. When that society is fully established, the community will be a community of workers only, each working for the good of the whole and finding in that community the only possible basis of a rich cultural life for himself. The community does not exist in and for self, nor does the individual. Both exist in and for each other and neither can exist without the other. The ultimate fact of social existence is personality in community.

It is this resolute refusal to stress one term at the expense of the other, and this determined adherence to its sense of the supreme, ultimate and indivisible value of both individuality and community, which is perhaps the most valuable contribution that Communism has made to social theory. It looks forward to an era when men will be really free, economically as well as politically, and it trusts to the play and interplay of freed personalities for that development of culture which in our Western industrial communities is so largely determined by class alignments.

We are now in a position to tabulate the main elements of Communist aims and methods:

1. Its main concern is for personality in community.
2. It is essentially transnational and missionary in character.
3. Its basic belief is in the self-transforming nature of matter itself.
4. It believes that economic organization determines thought and that inevitably that development of economic organisation means the triumph of the proletariat.

5. This development takes place by slow evolution culminating in crisis, i.e. its time-scheme is evolution plus revolution.

6. When the crisis arrives coercion is necessary to carry it through and is legitimate for the reason that if it inflicts hardship at the moment, on balance it prevents much more hardship and injury than it inflicts.

7. It believes that service to the whole community is the sole justification for existence of the individual.

8. In international relations its general tendency is pacific; in the time of crisis, however, it believes in both the necessity and legitimacy of the class war.

Working with these assumptions the U.S.S.R. has carried through the most impressive social experiment of all time. Over a land area comprising one-sixth of the entire globe, and in a population numbering now nearly some 200,000,000, it has put these principles into concrete operation and in a short space has transformed a vast community. It has done this out of deep poverty in face of internal dissension and external opposition by the capitalist Powers, whose first open hostility and unconcealed contempt for what seemed to them a hare-brained and impracticable experiment has passed by stages from would-be isolation to a grudging but now complete recognition that the Soviet Government has come to stay, and that it is a formidable force to be reckoned with in international affairs.

A highly trained and modernized army; what is commonly reported to be the largest air force in the world; and, above all, the phenomenal rise of Russia as an industrial country, have all combined to achieve this result. Early, an organization which within two decades lifted Russia from a lowly place to the third position amongst the great industrial nations, had behind it not only energy and will, but competency and stability as well. And every year that

passes increases the hold of the Soviet Government on its own people. Whilst in every other capitalist country there are vast masses of unemployed and their families whose standard of life has been definitely lowered, and many, even amongst the employed, earn wages barely above and often below the datum line of the subsistence level; in Russia, the standard of life, whilst low, has steadily been raised and is still rising. Unemployment has been eliminated, and if there is still deep poverty, it is at least a poverty in which all share. The East End of Moscow does not work for a bare pittance in order that the West End may revel in idle luxury.

Nor can one fail to be impressed with certain other great achievements. For political offences which might make the work of the central government more difficult, and for offences against communal property, punishment is still often severe and savage; but for all other offences the new Russian prison system is a widening attempt to apply in healthy and normal surroundings the best psychological and curative wisdom of the West. In such prison communities the prisoners largely govern themselves and the important persons are not the prison governor and warders, but the medical psycho-therapists. Punishment is remedial and redemptive, not retributive. The class bar, the sex bar, the colour bar, all have been broken down and done away with as they have never been since the early days of the Christian Church, when St Paul penned his famous phrase, "In Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, but all are one". Between the classes—such as still exist—between members of different races, between sexes, there is complete freedom and equality.

No less outstanding is the achievement in Russia in regard to children. The care for the child begins before birth when the mother is compelled to cease work at a

sufficiently safe period before the birth of the child. During that period and at her confinement and afterwards she is maintained by the community and has access to the best medical advice. When she returns to work the child is cared for by skilled management in crèches attached to the farms or factories, and as the child itself grows up, the way from the primary school to the university lies completely open.

In the realm of family life, the first sexual aberrations after the Revolution have now worked themselves out, and Russian marriage—itself a contract based on absolute equality between the sexes—and the Russian family are now fairly on the way to a settled, normal and happy establishment.

Social services, education, health, etc., have been enormously extended, and this, we repeat, out of deep poverty. Art, especially dramatic art, has been brought within the reach of every one; and already Russia is beginning to care for and to taste and enjoy as a whole the delights of the specifically spiritual life in man.

It is an impressive list of achievements. Russia has taken the best which the West has to offer and would seem to be in a fair way of out-matching it. In a word, there is a strong case to be made out for the statement that modern Russia is doing what early Christianity did—it is outliving, out-thinking and outdaring its contemporary civilization—in this case a capitalistic civilization. The occasional experiment of the latter, e.g. prison reform, in Russia has become characteristic of the new civilization, and privileges which in the West are confined to a few have become general for the whole community.

Above all, a new motive and a new spirit have been introduced into the community. The human spirit, freed from the knowledge that its industry was being used to buttress up the position and wealth of a privileged few, has been

set free to serve the community, knowing that the individual himself will reap the reward of his labours, and competent observers—as distinct from occasional travellers—who know the country from long and first-hand acquaintance with it, are almost wholly unanimous in reporting an amazing sense of fellowship consequent on the complete abolition of class distinction. It cannot fairly be doubted by now that life for the average citizen in Russia is richer and has more possibilities in it than at any preceding time in Russian history, and it bids fair to offer him an existence fuller and ultimately freer than that enjoyed by the rank and file of capitalist communities.

Nor does anything so completely reveal the moral blindness of crass materialism which has overtaken Western so-called Christendom as the fact that its criticism has fastened on the obvious material needs of Russia—its poverty, etc.—and has been utterly oblivious to the moral heroism, the tenacity and courage, which have made such achievements possible. To give new meaning to individual life, to hold up service of the community as the great ideal of life and to create a living fellowship—one would have thought that these would have called forth the spontaneous admiration of Christians, and our failure to appreciate and evaluate these things is in truth our severest condemnation, a proof of how deeply we are ourselves unconsciously committed to a way of thinking which is characteristic of and springs from our own apostacy, and derives from our unconscious adoption of the standards of capitalistic civilization.

It is the black side of the picture with which we are familiar, and indeed it is black enough, though not wholly without excuse. It should be remembered that the first blood of the Revolution was shed not by revolutionaries but by the counter-revolutionaries—as is nearly always the case—and that the counter-revolutionary movement was

supported by armed foreign invasion at home and vast foreign influence abroad. The combination of the two made Soviet Russia realize that if she was to succeed in her projects it would and could only be in the teeth of the most formidable opposition. Small wonder that in a time when all things were in jeopardy and highly precarious, a mood of ruthless repression of the opposition was engendered, and that the hostile elements were largely "liquidated" by persecution and slaughter. For that unreasoning mood engendered by fear, and the horrible acts to which that fear gave rise, no exculpation is possible; though Western Civilization, in so far as it contributed to the fear, must share responsibility both for it and them. Communist and capitalist alike in this regard are marked with the brand of Cain.

Christians have criticized with equal acerbity the anti-religious campaign in Russia, and indeed it is hard not to see that in this matter the solemn pledge of freedom in religion has been ruthlessly disregarded. Religion started with a bad handicap. Ignorant, superstitious, servile and the tool of the governing classes, it wore the guise of the Tsarist régime in ecclesiastical garb. True, the Greek Church had roused itself from its long slumber, and strong and important minority reform movements were already making themselves felt, but the deluge overtook and swamped them before they had time to impose and stamp themselves as a whole on the Russian Church. At the Revolution it was still mainly concerned with maintaining the *status quo* with the State.

Is it a thing to be marvelled at that when the State was overthrown the Church itself became an object of suspicion and hostility? The question may be fairly pressed: Should we have done any other in like circumstances? Did we do anything qualitatively different in the Puritan Rebellion and the Caroline Restoration? The Church in

Russia did but suffer the inevitable fate which any Church has always suffered—and always will—when it ceases to live by the light of its own inspiration and principles and enters into an alliance, tacit or avowed, with those who represent and control the existing order. And since the Revolution the completely individualistic and socially unethical character of religion in Russia has constantly betrayed it into false positions. Well-to-do peasant farmers have been known to quote the phrase “ Blessed is the man that sitteth not in the counsels of the ungodly ” as a serious reason for clinging to their individualistic farming and refusing to co-operate with the larger, collective, Soviet plans. Religion, therefore, both before the Revolution and afterwards, inevitably bore to the Soviet authorities the appearance of the chief enemy of Communist plans and ideals, and therefore, of something which must be stamped out. Hence, whilst the Constitution proclaimed the right of freedom for all in religion and for all religions, in practice there has been real persecution and the refusal of any right to propagate the Christian faith.

The nearest parallel situation, perhaps, is that of the Roman Catholic in the Elizabethan period, when religious faith and political disaffection were so inextricably mixed up that it is impossible to tell where one ends and the other begins. There is a close resemblance between that situation and the one existing in Russia to-day with this obvious difference, that in England the struggle was within religion and between two forces of it, whilst in Russia it is a struggle between religion—only very partially Christian—and a secularist organization of society. Religion in Russia is tied to an individualistic interpretation of life and society, and especially of the economic organization of society. It clings to the conception of the right of individual profit and therefore remains within the Soviet System as an unassimilated—and unless religion changes

its outlook—and unassimilable and potentially dangerous element. No Christian can remember save with horror the atrocities of the Bolsheviks in Russia, nor do anything other than regret the steady pressure to eliminate religion from Russian life, but even as he feels the horror he must needs be stricken with contrition, firstly, for the part which so-called Christian nations have played in creating the mood which gave birth to the atrocities and, secondly, that after two thousand years we have taught not only the world at large, but even our own professed adherents so little of what Christ really means for the corporate life of man.

This final word has to be said. What we have in Russia to-day is not Communism but State Capitalism, a stage which the Communist holds to be the inevitable transition stage between Capitalism and Communism. For the time being, he holds, the strong centralized dictatorship is inevitable and, therefore, so is the use of the means and instruments of coercion and repression. According to his theory and hope, both will give place to a successive stage in which real freedom and true personality are accomplished.

For the Communist, therefore, the denial of liberty is at the moment unavoidable, but it is only a passing phase, and to the moral indignation which protests against the pictures of real persecution and wholesale vindictive punishment, his reply is that at all events he is not guilty of the relentless misery which the Capitalist régime inflicts not only for a year or years, but for a life-time on its victims. "If you cannot show me pictures of ships being loaded by convicts clad only in coarse linen, neither can I show you long unemployment queues in every town, or the hopeless, dehumanized despair of the down-and-outs of Poplar or the slum areas of any great city." Judged by real tests and hard facts, he would claim that he has given

real liberty for sham, and that instead of paying lip service to ideas of the worth of every individual man and of liberty, for the first time in history the individual man is getting a real chance, and is enjoying freedom at the crucial point of his existence and where it has so often been denied him. The shadow has been lost, but the substance gained. Nor is it easy to rebut the claim.

To the fundamental situation of modern community, to wit, a tension between political freedom and oligarchic and despotic industry, there were clearly two possible solutions. The principle of democracy could be carried over into the economic sphere and industry become democratically controlled, or else the autocratic principle of industry could be carried over into the political domain, in which case the political organization of the community would become despotic. As we have seen, Communism adopts the former alternative, i.e. the democratization of industry.

It is the second alternative which has been adopted by *Fascism*, i.e. the "autocratization" of politics. It was inevitable that the threat which successful Bolshevism made to the Capitalist régime should not be noted outside its own borders and provoke a double reaction. On the one hand, perforce it set alight the smouldering hopes of Socialists in all countries; on the other it inevitably aroused the owning classes to a vivid realization of the imminent peril to their own status, prestige and power, and by consequence stiffened their determination to avert any such calamity—in their judgment—from their own country. It made them ready to "jump" the claim of the Socialist whenever the fitting opportunity presented itself.

Four years after the War the distress and disturbance and the internal dissension created by the Socialists' capture of industry in Italy provided the needed occasion, and Mussolini made his famous march on Rome. In Germany the situation was somewhat different. The disillusionment

of defeat in war in 1918; the firm belief, engendered by certain aspects of the post-war policy of the Allies that Germany was to be kept in a position of permanent economic and political inferiority; a sullen resentment against certain clauses of the Treaty of Versailles; the wholesale expropriation of the greater part of Germany's economic resources by the loss of Alsace-Lorraine and the occupation of Ruhr territory by the French; the financial crisis of 1924, when almost overnight the middle classes saw their savings and their specific economic power swept away; the growing volume of unemployment combined to establish and issued in one clear fact—what can only be called "Loss of soul". Empire, prosperity, pride of race, all had gone and there was nothing left to hold the German soul together. Both the coherent aim and the fixed basis of life had gone. The German mind was left without compass or rudder.

The result was seen in the increasing rate of suicide especially amongst young people, in a volatile experimentation with all manner of religious and social theories and in the splitting up of political life into a score of competing and, for the most part, incompatible political parties. If Italy's circumstances were those of economic anarchy, the situation in Germany was fundamentally that of a spiritual distress in which the economic situation was only one, even if a very important, factor.

Such was the setting of the scene for the arrival of Adolf Hitler. His transparent sincerity, his magnetic personality and, above all, his exaltation of the idea of the Reich, allied with certain socialist elements in his teaching—soon dropped, it must be confessed, in the actual carrying out of his plans—gave back to Germany a centre of loyalty on which the German soul could focus itself, could win back in self-respect, and so provide the first stepping-stones across the slough of despondency and despair into a new

place in the sun. The words of Chancellor Von Papen at the opening of the Reichstag when Hitler came into power in 1933 reveal the heart of the situation and doubtless they expressed what was in the minds of many: “ If this experiment fails, there is nothing left for it but Communism ”. National Socialism, in a word, is Germany’s last stand against the Communist, and to the writer’s own knowledge that is the view taken by many in Germany who are uneasy at the methods which characterize the Nazi rule, and have still more misgivings about the philosophy which is employed to justify its programme. They prefer the devil they know to the devil they don’t.

The policies of both Fascist and Nazi have been carried out with a brutality at least as gross as that of the Bolshevik régime in Russia. The stories of assassination, murder, illegal trial, the overriding of justice, the punishment of absent enemies by the imprisonment of their relatives and friends, all these are too well known and authenticated to leave any room for doubt. The policy of Government by Terror is not more characteristic of one than of the other. For Italy, there is less excuse than for Germany. Her difficulties were almost purely internal; the difficulties of Germany were both internal and external. It was possible to read into the policy of the Allies the determination to keep Germany in an inferior economic and political position, whilst the memorandum of Sir John Simon on Disarmament—the influence of which on rallying the German people to the side of Hitler had not yet been fully recognized—was in fact interpreted to mean that Germany would be held to the letter of the Disarmament clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, but that the Allies acknowledged no such obligation. As a German who has himself suffered under the Nazi régime, put it to the writer two years ago: “ The Allies’ intervention was responsible for the murder of the Tsar, and Sir John Simon fastened Hitler on us ”.

It is not contended here that such is a completely true account of the matter; all that is asserted is that the policy of the Allies was capable of such a construction being put upon it. That it was possible so to be construed, means that the Allies must bear some share at least of the guilt of German terrorism.

The fear of spiritual and social dissolution in both Italy and Germany of which we have already spoken meant something more, for the great characteristic of fear is that it not only plunges into excesses of brutal action, but as well invites parasitic emotions. Our fears are often the scene-shifters for our sins; they set the stage on which ugly and repellent actors play their parts. It has been so in Germany. Attached to that primary basis of fear, and by now covering it as completely as the mistletoe does an oak, is that national and bellicose arrogance which is summed up in the German word '*Ehre*' honour, and which may well prove to be the most explosive and destructive idea of modern Europe. Exclusive racial pride grafted on to fear, and using the instincts both of self-preservation and self-assertion which fear engenders, is the new-old characteristic of the mentality which to-day marks those who are in control of the political, cultural, and social destinies of Germany, and it is only a little less true of Italy.

No word needs to be said concerning the threat which such a temper holds for the peace of the world. To give an account of the philosophies which underly Italian and German Fascism is not easy, partly because, as we have already remarked, their philosophies were developed as a justification of the facts, partly because of the inherent contradictions in the basic philosophy itself. Marx's *Das Kapital*, the text-book of the Bolshevik revolution, had had more than fifty years in which it could be assimilated and its doctrine spread before any attempt was made

to embody its teaching in a definite political experiment.

Not so with Fascism. In Hegel's Political Philosophy of the Absolute State, and in certain aspects of the earlier work of Kierkegaard there were isolated ideas waiting to hand, but coherent philosophy there was none. One of the vital differences between modern Communism and modern Fascism is that Communism is a revolution based on a philosophy, whilst Fascism is a philosophy based on a revolution. The philosophy of the latter has much more in mind the practical necessity of justifying the *fait accompli* of Fascism and of providing reasons for its maintenance and continuance.

Two elements in that philosophy can be isolated. The first links up with what we discussed in our first chapter as the flight from reason, and to it we may give the name *Libidinism*. It is often called *Vitalism*, but as Vitalism is already used of the philosophy of life associated with the name of Hans Driesch, and even though there are several points of contact between Vitalism and the Fascist conception of Life, yet the one is not the other, and cannot be equated with it. We derive our own name for this element from the technical name given by exponents of the "New Psychology" to the "life drive", the mass of instinctive and unconscious energies within every man. The technical name for this "life drive" is "libido", and hence we suggest that "Libidinism" more exactly fits the reference which the Fascist makes, than Vitalism.

According to this theory it is these deep, instinctive drives in human nature which constitute essential human nature. The mind plays a comparatively small and neglected part; indeed, one German writer goes so far as to describe mind as a parasite and a poison. Man lives only when these deep, instinctive drives are satisfied. And

these drives are racial, they are the common possession of all. Now, the sense of the individuality on the one hand, and the political form of democracy on the other, are both the products of reason and self-consciousness, and since these latter are invalid, the individuality and democracy which depend upon them are invalid also. Hence Libidivism is anti-individualistic and anti-democratic. Therefore Community is not made up of the personal relations of individuals. The relationship of the individual to the community is almost exactly that of the biological cell to the physical body. It is there because it is part of the body and has no meaning at all, apart from its function within the body. Yet, just as there are brain cells, nerve cells, etc., and each cell has its relation to the whole body only through its relation with groups of cells which enter as a unit into the life of the body, so each individual has significance only in so far as it shares in other relationships with unit groups which are larger than itself. The relationship between individuals only seems direct and personal because of the illusion and distortion wrought by conscious mind. In reality they are only related in so far as they share in the life of the unit. And these units are essentially abstractions. Two artists are not actually directed to one another; they are really only related by their common relation to a unit called Art; two workmen, or two employees, are related only because each is part of a unit containing both and called the economic unit, and so on. The whole is the organic sum of these units, and is the Race or State. Morality, therefore, is non-existent except as prescribed by the Race or State. The State is but the embodiment of the unconscious will to live, and Rosenberg would add the Will to Power, which he finds characteristic of the Nordic race. The Fascist State is, in truth, little more than Mr. George Bernard Shaw's "Life-Force" writ large in a political community, and when Mr.

Shaw holds up dictators for approval, he is in truth only doing what fond mamma does when she holds up little Alice's recitation of " I want to be an angel " to the admiration of her own relatives and friends. So Mr. Shaw is human after all.

In those life-drives of which we have spoken, the basic one is the drive to satisfy hunger and, therefore, the supreme function of the individual is to be found in the sphere of work, i.e. economics. Man is primarily a bit of productive mechanism, controlled entirely by the needs, not of himself or of his fellows, but of an impersonal reality called the Race State. He is under orders from first to last, and the thing most to be desired, and to which the Fascist looks forward, is the growth of a new consciousness in which the sense of the well-being of the impersonal State shall completely overlay and stifle his sense of his own individuality. Hence comes into being the idea of the Totalitarian State controlling at every point the life of its citizens, and thrusting down to the level of a half-conscious cell at best, the idea of the worth and value of the individual. The State guarantees the truth of what it teaches and demands, or rather, what the State teaches and demands are *ipso facto* true.

The inner significance of that is that the political sphere has been swamped by the economic; the autocratic method of industry has supplanted the old idea of democratic freedom and has become the dominant and essential principle of the State.

Dictatorship is its very heart and its indispensable soul. Nor can one deny that by its methods and organization Fascism, both in Germany and Italy, has accomplished great things. It has reunified the nations concerned; it has set them on what, on the surface, looks like the road to material and political discipline and prosperity; above all, it has given back something like a " Soul " to

both the German and Italian peoples. Now, at all events, the German and Italian feels he has been given something to live for, one master loyalty to knit together all his individual capacities and interests.

The tragedy is that the soul it has created is a soul which loves its own nation on a basis of contempt for all other nations, and which assumes almost as a postulate that the battle goes only to the strong. Its discipline is a discipline which, beginning with the idea of re-creating self-respect, may easily pass over into a lust for dominion, and indeed, if its own inherent logic be followed out, must do so.

Such a conception of political and economic discipline, running on all fours as it does with the discipline inherent in the Capitalist régime in Industry, could not fail to make its appeal to those who were concerned to maintain the old order, and this in fact it has done. Alike in Italy and in Germany, Fascism is the expression of the capitalist mind, supported and kept in power by the lower middle classes, whom doctrinaire Communism had driven into the arms of the enemy.

The tension of which we have already spoken as being the distinctive feature of modern community, to wit, the tension between autocratic industry and democratic politics has been solved in one way in Russia, in a completely opposite way in Germany and Italy; in our own country it is still largely unsettled, and the tension still remains. Sooner or later, however, it will have to be settled, and to imagine that we can go on living indefinitely in what is fundamentally a situation of unstable equilibrium, is to bury our head in the sand, and to live in a fool's paradise. To imagine that vast multitudes of men and women will consent indefinitely to see their economic aspirations towards self-government thwarted at Westminster, or to imagine, on the other hand, that those who at the moment

wield economic power would easily consent to be deprived of that power at Westminster, is to be blind to realities, and to live in a day-dream.

The events of 1914 in Ireland, and the Carson-Smith-military officers' refusal to obey the will of Parliament, provided us with a formidable hint as to the real extent of the hold of Parliament when prestige is threatened and strong passions are aroused. The fact that army officers may apparently flirt with Fascism whilst the private soldier is to be kept insulated from the virus of Socialism at all costs, has already suggested to the minds of many thoughtful workers that the scales are weighted against them, and Mr. Neville Chamberlain's gift to the brewers in his Budget of 1933, of a sum of money which would have paid three or four times over for the cost of raising the school age and so helped to a partial solution of the unemployment problem, has been widely interpreted as pointing in the same direction. At bottom it is a question of the transfer, not so much of wealth, as of power. Either the workers must control their own economic fate as they do their own political destiny, or else the political machine must be made to approximate to the conditions existing in industry. In any case, it involves a transfer of power so vast that both those who possess it and those who desire it, will leave no stone unturned to achieve their ends.

The situation which sooner or later will confront us may be visualized if we imagine a Socialist Government returned, not merely to office, but to power, and determined to put its programme into operation. Does any one imagine that if such an event transpired the present wielders of power would meekly obey the mandate of the electors, or that every means of financial and economic sabotage would not be employed to wreck the Government's proposals? And could such a Government do anything else than forcibly suppress those who so acted? And can one imagine

that if such an event as a real Socialist government and a real Socialist programme were on the horizon, strenuous efforts would not be made to forestall it and take the decision clean out of the hands of Parliament? And would organized Labour take such an attempt lying down? To ask the questions is to answer them. It is clear that we are rapidly approaching the time when parliamentary democracy will be subjected to a greater strain, and to a severer tension than ever before. The issue is either complete democracy, economic as well as political, or the re-imposition of authoritarian discipline, and the issue can hardly be overlong delayed.

Such issues are obviously of great importance for the Christian Church, and a score of questions arise. With which solution does the genius of Christianity most nearly agree? With the Communist or the Fascist? How far does that agreement go? And the still more radical question: Has Christianity anything to say at all? Has it any concern with politics, economics, and the life of the community, or is its concern solely with "spirit" and "spiritual" realities? Before we can answer the former questions it is clear that we must answer the latter, and that, only in so far as we can define the Christian concern for the community can we evaluate either Communism or Fascism in terms of Christian standards and make plain the relationship of Christianity to both.

To that task we now turn, making only one assumption, that the true nature of Christianity is to be discovered, not in the possibly adulterated forms of it which history discloses, but in the words of the Founder of Christianity Himself. It is, therefore, to the actual teaching of Jesus that we turn to find what bearing, if any, Christianity has in the problems of Community.

CHAPTER III

KINGDOM OF GOD

IN considering the sources of our material for an estimate of the teaching of Jesus, we assume the now generally accepted critical position that in the first three Gospels alone do we find what may largely be relied on as the actual words of Jesus, and that in the Fourth Gospel we have the reflection of a later generation of Christians. The Gospel of John can therefore only be used with extreme caution for the actual teaching of Jesus—its unique and abiding value is to be found in other directions. Even within the first three Gospels there are different strata, and in the later documents the theological tendency to remove Jesus from the sphere of strictly human emotions and experience is manifest.

To take only one incident, to which we shall return later. In the incident of the healing of the man with the withered hand in the synagogue at Capernaum, the reaction of Jesus to the sullen hardness of heart of the Pharisees standing by, is described by Mark as being that of "anger". In the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, the "anger" drops out entirely and is softened down.

We have, in fact, four strands of tradition to deal with. The greater part of the Gospel of St. Mark is embodied with comparatively small alteration in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, and in what is left of the two later Gospels when St. Mark has been subtracted, there is a large body of incidents and sayings common to both. The two Evangelists were evidently using a common source, and to this common source scholars give the name "Q". It is generally agreed that the internal evidence of "Q" points

to the fact that it was a document current in Palestine, and that its date is not later than A.D. 54, i.e. almost exactly the interval after the death of Jesus as has elapsed since the beginning of the Great War and this present year.

The point is important because it means that the document, and the material of the document, was current in a community, many members of which must have had personal knowledge of both the events and the teaching of Jesus. Next in order comes the Gospel of St. Mark itself, and lastly, the special sources of information used by St. Matthew and St. Luke, respectively. For the most part, we shall confine our reference to these documents.

Nor need we take much account of the clear tendency to theologize about Jesus. That tendency, as the *Formgeschichte* School of critics has rightly insisted, was probably present from the first, but it does not affect our special interest here. We are not concerned to find the original faith about Jesus, but the original faith of Jesus, especially His moral convictions about life in the community. If there was any tendency to modify these, it would probably be in the direction of making them approximate as nearly as possible to the moral opinion current in the community in which the Gospel was preached. The probabilities were that their sharp edges and clear outline would be somewhat blurred. From that point of view we may be reasonably sure that we have, in the Gospels at least, the minimum statement of what Jesus actually believed about both the individual and the community.

A further reflection makes us realize that a powerful influence was at work to preserve the teaching as nearly as possible. To anticipate our conclusion a little, the early Church was conscious of itself as a "New Israel", it possessed an extraordinarily strong sense of being a unique community inheriting all the religious promises and prestige of the Jewish nation. That sense of being a

“peculiar people” would almost inevitably act as a tendency to keep their witness clear and unequivocal, and so would work in the direction of preserving the words of Jesus as nearly as possible. We shall, of course, have to be aware of and on our guard against the possibility of the Church of the first two generations reading back its own situation and problems into the original records, but even so, such interpolations will have their own value as testifying to what the early Church actually thought of itself, and what its practices were as a community.

We shall not, of course, expect to find detailed and particular guidance for our own particular problems. When St. John puts into the mouth of Jesus the words, “When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he shall guide you into all truth”, he was but summing up and giving point to a strain which runs all through the teaching of Jesus in the Synoptics, to wit, the responsibility resting on every disciple of listening for and acting on the promptings of the Spirit. Jesus never lifted the burden of thinking out their own problems of loyalty and acting on the results from the shoulders of His followers, either in His own or in any succeeding generation. What a man should do in a given situation was his own affair, and depended on his own insight and will.

His own circumstances and setting were so different from ours. He lived in a world which was predominantly an agricultural and handcraft economy; ours is industrial and mechanical. Nor were the ramifications of international commerce and finance so complicated, technical, and involved as ours are. That wide difference of situation might seem to preclude Him from being able to provide any guidance for our own special problems of to-day. It must be remembered, however, that whilst the politico-economic forms of communities change, the fundamental motives which give rise to them do not change. Hunger

and love, fear and pride, remain to-day unchanged from what they were in His day. The basic human demands and needs remain. Above all, the fundamental make-up and structure of the world has not changed. What it always has been, it is, and it is this sense of the reality of the unchanging nature of fundamental man, life, and of community which takes Jesus out of the category of ancient or modern, and makes His judgment timeless because it is concerned, not with opinion or whim, but with truth itself.

We shall expect from Jesus, therefore, not so much specific commands, morally valid for all time, but insights into the nature of existence and into the true being of man. We shall look for Him to indicate on that basis which motives are legitimate for the creation of community and which not, and we shall expect to find, in addition, illustrations of how He translated into practice in His own day, His own principles. We may call these latter "ethical considerations".

We have to remind ourselves, when studying the teaching of Jesus with special reference to His thought about community, that implicit in all He said were certain assumptions which He derived from His Jewish ancestry and backgrounds; of these, two are important for our especial concern. The first is that He accepted the Jewish conception of God as Creator. The World and Man were made by Him, and by His Power the Universe was sustained. The heart of the Jewish thought of God was that God was Will. But the Will of God is not static; it desires to achieve a supreme purpose, in which the Will of God and the well-being of Man will be perfectly blended. More, this purpose was to be achieved on the human scene and in history. The grand theme and underlying *motif* of almost the whole of the Old Testament is the historical manifestation and realization of that purpose. It was this conception

of the Will of God as working itself out in the concrete, historic affairs of men which Jesus accepted, and an understanding of which is vital for a true judgment of the teaching of Jesus. Without that understanding His teaching is hung in mid-air. He belongs in this regard to the tradition of the great prophets who saw the successive events of history as shaped by the primal, creative Will of God.

Closely allied to that realistic conception of the Will of God is His conception of human personality. He, with all His forebears and contemporaries, steadily refused to split up personality. He refused to divide it sharply into spirit and body. The modern psychologist describes personality as mind-body, meaning thereby that these two aspects are indissolubly bound together and cannot be separated. There is a close analogy to that in the teaching of Jesus: personality for Him is always spirit-body. The large place given in His life to works of healing, implies that, to Him disease was an evil which distorted and maimed individuality. True, He thought that spirit was, as it were, the crucial centre of personality. A man's spiritual attitude to God and his fellows determined his treatment of both, but both had to be embodied in concrete visible action.

And as with the individual so with the community. "spiritual community" to Him was an abstraction, and therefore unreal. Community of Spirit must express itself in material community, and, as we shall see, nothing was further from His mind than our modern "religious" notion, that there can be either a purely spiritual community on the one hand, or a purely economic or political community on the other. The former was bound to express itself in terms of a material fellowship, whilst the latter was the result of fundamental spiritual attitudes, either good or bad, on the part of man to both God and his fellows. True, there were occasions when a man would

clearly bring under review those specifically spiritual attitudes; he would seek in communion with God the cleansing and rectification of them, and he would reinforce himself against doubt and fear in that same Presence.

But Jesus never seems to have been interested in "spiritual experience" for its own sake, or to have thought of it as an end in itself. Always, what mattered was that what a man did with his spiritual experience, what use he made of it, and what expression he gave to it. Our only knowledge of whether we have had a real spiritual experience is its ethical results. It was deeds, not words that mattered. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Religion was both a matter of withdrawing and of outgoing, of the secret place and of the market-place, of the Mount of Transfiguration and of meeting the urgent call of actual need in the crowded and turbulent valley below. To be real and healthy religion must have its own dialectic, its own swing of the pendulum, its own alternation between solitude and society, between Communion and Community.

It is this clear refusal of Jesus to separate spirit and matter and accord either an existence in its own right and as an end in itself, this demand that the spiritual factors of personality shall express themselves in material acts and relationships, and spiritual community in real community, that shows itself as the connecting link and thread of all His teaching. Keeping these two assumptions in mind, we may now proceed to study His teaching.

Dominant in all His thinking as the records have passed it on to us, is the phrase, "The Kingdom of God", and its analogue, "The Kingdom of Heaven". Four questions at once arise. "What did He understand by the term?" "When was the Kingdom to come?" "How was it to be established, and by whom?"

"What did He understand by the term?" Here there are two aspects to be considered: (1) Was it an individual

thing or a communal? (2) Was it a spiritual, or a visible society?

He took the term over from the current religious language of His day, especially from what is known as the "apocalyptic" thought of His time. Outside the canon of the Old Testament there is a whole range of literature which betrays how eagerly, in certain circles, the advent of the Reign of God was expected. Though not without universalist elements, it is for the most part cast into a nationalistic mould of thought. For the contemporaries of Jesus the times were big with fate. The time was not far distant when either God Himself or His chosen Messiah would appear to restore the lost liberties and prosperity of Israel. That is the heart of the apocalyptic message, couched in terms borrowed not infrequently from Persian angelology and astrology, and whose meaning to-day it is not always easy to recover. Its one burden is "The day of God is at hand".

Just before the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus public expectation was fanned to a flame by the appearance of John the Baptist: his message bore a close resemblance to that of the Prophets with their doctrine of "the remnant", the faithful who alone would inherit the ancient promise given to the nation. John came preaching repentance and baptized for the remission of sins, and only those who repented would inherit the Kingdom. He half-cut the close bonds which tied the Messianic idea to the nation. "Think not to say within yourselves, 'We are Abraham's children', for I tell you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Moral renewal was what mattered.

Yet he did not wholly sever the bonds. It was to the repentant *in Israel* that the Kingdom would be given, and no thought of the great world outside seems to have troubled him. He still remains at heart a nationalist, albeit

his nationalism is moralized. He has only half broken away, not completely.

It was into that milieu of hot and eager anticipation that Jesus came with his message, and clearly he shared in its expectation. "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and saying, 'The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent ye, and believe the gospel.'" What are we to make of this apocalyptic belief of Jesus and His contemporaries? It is usually dismissed as a delusion. The Jews were in a desperate plight from which there were no discernable means of deliverance, therefore, so runs the explanation, out of sheer despair they unconsciously fooled themselves into believing in the intervention of God. Apocalyptic hopes and dreams were really a mechanism of psychological compensation created to make their actual condition endurable. Such, as we have said, is the almost universal and fashionable explanation.

But what if its central conviction is true? What if it were really the case that a crisis had really arisen and the orbit of man and God had drawn near together? What if the authors of the apocalyptic literature were sensitive to it and half saw it?—"Men as trees walking"—and consequently their vision was distorted and must needs be cast in all the queer figures and symbols they employ? What if what they saw dimly Jesus saw clearly, and so could dispense with the whole crowd of stage properties employed by his contemporaries? Astronomers tell us that not improbably the moon was torn out of what is now the Pacific Ocean by a star which passed close to the earth, and what if something like that were true of the relations between the Will of God and the Will of Man in the time of Jesus? What, in a word, if Jesus saw history as a process of slow maturing, culminating in a time of crisis in His own day? "The time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand."

What does that mean but that a time-sequence in history had come to a head in a crisis, and that just then, if ever, the circumstances had arisen in which, if men could and would make the right response, the reign of God would begin? Such, we believe, is the true explanation of apocalyptic. Despair may not only create compensations, it may as well and at the same time give insight, it may create a kind of sensitiveness to true spiritual realities which gay and more prosperous times blunt and dull.

In any case, there is no hint in the life of Jesus of any mental abnormality or aberration such as would have marked Him had the compensation theory of apocalyptic been true. In the Gospels there is the surge and clash of opposed political and religious parties, but He himself is almost invariably serene. He moves in an atmosphere of quietness and wears an air of peace. It is all so calm and collected, and the very opposite of what we should expect in a victim of despair. There is urgency in His message, of course, but the note of urgency never becomes a shriek.

In one sense His very genius lies in His matter-of-factness. He is at leisure to note the birds of the air and the beasts of the field, and He knows the way and splendour of the lilies of the field. He can enter into the common loves sorrows and joys of His friends and acquaintances in a way impossible to one dominated by the self-centredness of despair. Wherever else it came from, His apocalyptic hope and belief did not spring from that. Rather was it born of His own insight, itself the product of His own moral devotion to and religious communion with God. He knew that God was near, He discerned that the times were ripe, and His own apocalyptic hope was born of that insight and experience. Such, we believe, is the true account of the matter.

In other and more modern words, Jesus believed in slow development issuing in a crisis, and He knew that He him-

self was living in a time of crisis. On the choice His people made, then, would depend the new and divine order of life and society.

Just as He refused to split man into spirit and body, so He refused to disrupt the Kingdom of God into either a purely individual or a purely social fact. It was both. For Him the prime fact was the rule of God both in the individual and society. In whomsoever God rules, and wheresoever, there is the Kingdom. It is individual, yet it is social as well, and both aspects are necessary if the Kingdom is to be fully realized. The Kingdom is both within man and among men.

Nothing in the Gospels stands out more clearly than the eagerness of Jesus to win individuals. "Follow *thou* me," and He always insisted that in the last resort a man's attitude to God rested on his own individual choice, and was his own individual responsibility. That was a decision which no other could make for him. "Except a man say 'no' to himself, he cannot be my disciple." No crowd decision, no mass movement, could do that for a man. To God he stood or fell alone, and of that responsibility it was impossible to absolve him. The Gospels are made up of general preaching, and individual healings and individual dealings with men. When He has discovered from the words of His disciples what others are thinking of Him, He comes back at them with, "But whom say ye that I am?" A good deal of the Sermon on the Mount is couched in individual terms, "Thou, when *thou* prayest"—"Thou, when *thou* givest alms"—"Give to him that asketh *thee*". Jesus never lets the man escape in the crowd. His arrows are aimed at the individual. The parables of the woman seeking the one piece of lost silver and the shepherd seeking the one lost sheep, with their haunting refrains, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth", speak

with an unforgettable tenderness of another side of the same fact of the Kingdom of God as an individual possession—the love of God for the individual.

Yet no less clearly Jesus thought of the Kingdom as social. His earliest recorded preaching, to which we have already referred, “Repent, and believe the Gospel” reads much more like a national summons to repent than a simply individual appeal. But the matter is put beyond all doubt when we consider certain of His typical sayings and remember that if His conception of it had not been social, He would have had to stress the individual aspect of it much more strongly than He did. To the Jews of His day the Kingdom of Heaven *did* denote a social order—even a national order—and in it were involved both economics and politics. If Jesus believed that it was a purely individual reality and did not make that fact abundantly clear—as He did not—He would have been guilty of misleading His contemporaries. He would have used in one sense terms which they understood in another.

Yet nowhere is the purely individualistic emphasis allowed to stand by itself so as to suggest that it was the main truth about the Kingdom. The fact that Jesus took a common phrase and nowhere hints that it has a different reference from what His contemporaries gave it, amounts to positive proof that He did not disagree with that fundamental reference of it to community life.

The matter is clinched when we examine one incident and one vital phrase of Jesus—the story of the temptation in the Wilderness, and the deliberate avowal that He had come not to destroy the Law and the Prophets but to fulfil them. What the temptation actually meant in the way of personal appeal to Himself is clear. The temptation to make stones bread played upon that deep instinct of self-preservation at all costs; the temptation to cast Himself down from the pinnacle was the temptation to exhibition-

ism; the temptation to worship the devil worked on that herd-instinct which makes us unwilling to be thought peculiar and is the nursing-mother of most compromises with truth and goodness. Do they not mean much more, however? Consider the replies He gives to the tempter: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God"; "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God"; "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." On looking up the incidents to which these texts refer in a reference Bible, it is seen at once that *all these replies are taken from great national crises in the history of Israel* and all dating from that critical discipline of the forty years' wandering in the wilderness. We are driven to draw the inference that Jesus believes that He too was living in a formative age, and that in His own person a *national* issue was being settled. His message, in a word, had a direct reference to society and community, and we shall not be far wrong if we assume that in the temptation Jesus was rejecting the ecclesiastico-political parties of His day—the Sadducean, the Zealot and the Herodian. Not by the policies which they sponsored, economic prosperity, heady and suicidal revolt, and compromise, could Judah become the Kingdom of God. The message was social from the very first.

The last doubt goes when we consider the implication of His assertion that He had come to fulfil both Law and Prophets. Our modern—and vicious—religious tendency to spiritualize overmuch has resulted in isolating the aspect of the Law as a body of religious truth. We ought, of course, to have been warned off such illicit abstraction by the addition of the phrase "and the prophets", for if one thing is unmistakable about the prophets, it is that they were concerned with real economic and political righteousness. Yet abstract we do. Now Jesus did come to re-draw the picture of God and religion. He did come to make

what was peripheral and half-accidental in the Jewish picture, its very centre and soul. It is not untrue to say we think that the contemporary Jewish conception of His time was mainly that of the Holiness and Sovereignty of God, with Love tacked on to it as it were. He made Love central, the very seat of Holiness, and drew it in such large outline and gave such depth to it, that it carried Majesty along with it. He gave it wider influence, broader scope and profounder depth. God was concerned with people whom the Pharisees could not conceive Him being concerned with save in wrath. He sought them, no matter how widely they had wandered. The parable of the Good Shepherd, a picture first of all of Jesus and then of God, with its teaching that God goes out after those who have missed their way, marks a new emphasis; and on the Cross, in that dire acted parable, He finally convinced men that God not only goes out and after men in their need, but that in order to save them He is prepared to pay the last price and face the last extremity of suffering.

But the Law was infinitely more than an authoritative body of specifically religious truth. It was the very bond of community. It had to do with both economic, legal and political relationships and, in theory at all events, it controlled and determined them all. What He meant by saying that He had come to "fulfil" it, we must reserve for our later discussions. Enough for us here to be sure that when Jesus spoke thus He was saying in so many words that He was concerned all the time and radically with a concrete community.

Nor are there wanting occasional other hints in the Gospels which point in the same direction. "Love your enemies" reads amazingly like cool and unpopular political counsel in a time when tempers were frayed and passions hot, whilst there is no mistaking the meaning of His reply to those who told Him of those "whose blood

Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices". "Repent, for except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" is the unmistakable proclamation of national doom.

To say that Jesus had nothing to do with politics or with economics therefore is nonsense—maybe the defence of sham religion against real, of partial faith against full faith. It makes religion dope, not dynamic; it anæsthetizes us in a kind of spiritual lotus-land against the real problems and real cancers of life. Jesus was concerned with real individuals and with real society, with full life and full community, and if what we have been saying is true, the foundations of His thinking are that spirit and body are inseparable and that the basis of a true society is the individual in community.

The question as to when Jesus expected that Kingdom to come is extraordinarily difficult, and any possible answer must still contain much that is obscure in it. At times He seems to have expected it in His own lifetime. "Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come," is, according to St. Matthew, part of His commission to His disciples on their first mission. At other times He seemed to set the coming of the Kingdom after His own death, but within the lifetime of some of His contemporaries. "Verily I say unto you, there be some of them which stand here that shall not taste of death until they have seen the Kingdom of God come with power." In all probability we must connect that and similar phrases with His teaching in the later part of the Gospel of St. Mark, where He makes the fall of Jerusalem the prelude to the return of the Son of Man. Such an event would and did actually transpire, when some of those who listened to Jesus were still alive. Yet He claimed no certainty of knowledge for Himself, and in plain words He said as much. "Of that hour no man knoweth, not even the Son, save only the Father". What He seems to

have felt was that the whole age was one of crisis, but that the precise point at which it would come to a head was uncertain. We have really no warrant in the Gospels for a considerable body of interpretation to-day which suggests that Jesus went up to Jerusalem to force the issue, knowing that it could only result in His death, and believing that His death would usher in the Kingdom. If our interpretation of the second temptation is right, then such an act would really have been "tempting God" and an attempt to force His hand. Rather must we see in His last entry into Jerusalem His last offer of repentance to His people; it was the last gesture of passionate patriotism. As we shall shortly see, Jesus had turned from the existing political community and had almost lost hope of it, but there was one last chance left to it, and such a chance He would offer it. It was the gambler's last throw of the dice and the gambler was Love Incarnate. Even at the eleventh hour, if He openly assumed the Messianic rôle and made a royal entry, His people might change their minds. Such we believe is the true explanation of the entry into Jerusalem. The other is pure conjecture, and assumes, quite contrary to the word of Jesus Himself, that He knew just when and how the Kingdom was going to come, and this His mind was more completely dominated by apocalyptic thought than it was in fact.

For in the teaching of Jesus there is another strain which emphasizes the fact of slow, indiscernible, quiet growth. Then parables of the leaven, of the seed growing secretly, of the wheat and the tares, and of the mustard seed, fit in more nearly with our ideas of gradual evolutionary development rather than with a quickly mounting revolutionary crisis. We shall probably come near the truth of the time scheme of Jesus if we say that He believed Himself to be living in a time of crisis which was itself the end of a process of development. Within that crisis and

after it there might be development, but that in turn would be summed up in a new crisis. In any case, the time scheme is evolution-revolution, development—crisis.

Yet if Jesus shared to the full with His contemporaries the expectation of the speedy coming of the Kingdom, He shared no less completely in their conviction that the Kingdom when it came would be the act and gift of God Himself. Nowhere does He suggest that the Kingdom of God is a man-created Utopia designed and built by man out of his own resources and for his own satisfaction and delight. The thought would seem to be that man can but create the conditions and the possibility; it is God alone who makes the possible, real and actual. Nothing is further from the mind of Jesus than our own modern notion deriving largely from the theology of Ritschl on the one hand, and from Maurice and Kingsley on the other, that man himself creates the Kingdom. The Kingdom is always God's gift—it is the very life of God self-offered and self-imparted to man and society. In that achievement God would express His goodwill to man most perfectly, and at the same time man would realize his highest destiny in community. The Kingdom is neither wholly theocentric nor wholly humanist, but both. It was at one and the same time human life and community taken up into and informed by the life of God, and God giving the fullest expression of Himself, i.e. of His love, that was possible. The Kingdom of God is the final satisfaction of both man and God and in it coincide the ultimate concerns of both. It was dependent for its realization upon both God's activity and man's. Its ultimate condition was the self-imparting love of God; its proximate condition was the obedience of man. Without either it could not be.

It was these human conditions of the coming of the Kingdom of God which formed the burden of His preaching and was His main concern. Nowhere does He draw

for us a prophetic picture of what the Kingdom would actually be like, and He left us no detailed description of what its economic practices and political relationships would be. We have bare hints that it would be an age of plenty. "Everyone that hath forsaken houses or lands, shall receive an hundredfold", and "Be not anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat or what shall we drink?' or 'Wherewithal shall we be clothed?'" "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness (justice) and all these things shall be added unto you", is a promise and yet a warning that economic satisfaction waits on the fulfilment of the moral conditions.

It is, perhaps, not reading too much into His mind to say that the same consideration determined His emphasis and accent when speaking of God. For to Jesus there were two basic conditions to be met. He adopted as His own the reply of the scribe, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself". The broad conditions as Jesus saw them were two—Love to God and Love to Man, and these two constituted an indissoluble unity. They formed the great commandment and were the foundation on which rested both the Law and the Prophets. They were both aspects of the one unity and could not in reality exist apart any more than there can be an inside of a cup without an outside; a front without a back.

By "love" Jesus meant a goodwill which identifies itself with its object. The word is primarily used in the New Testament of God's own Holy, Redemptive Love towards men, and it is transferred by analogy to the relationship of man to God. It was because Jesus saw that unless God was made lovable, men could not love Him, and that the right mental and spiritual attitude to Him would be impossible, that He spent such infinite time and

pains in trying to persuade His people that God was really Father.

Such at all events is the impression which the Gospels make upon us, and Jesus can have had few more exalted moments than the one in which He saw that what He had Himself discovered to be true of God in His communion with Him, was precisely the very thing which alone would help His people to make the right response to Him. Unless men loved God, unless they identified themselves with His Will and Purpose, the Kingdom could not come.

Yet, equally, it could not come unless man loved his neighbour. To "love one's neighbour as oneself" does not mean to love him as much as one loves himself, but to love him as if he were one's other self. If Jesus pleaded for self-identification with God, He pleaded no less for self-identification with one's fellows. And that relationship of man to man was to take no count of anything save the simple human consideration. All accidents of class, religion and nationality, of desert even, were to be neglected. Man owes love to his neighbour as man, and it ought to over-ride—such is the clear teaching of the parable of the Good Samaritan—even so wide a gulf as separated Jew from Samaritan and the difference between the ceremonial cleanness of priest and Levite and a blood-spattered Gentile lying wounded by the side of the road.

We come here upon the true interpretation of the far-reaching phrase of Jesus which has not received the attention it merits and to which we have already referred. "I came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets but to fulfil." That sentence is much more than a philosophy of history. There is no warrant at all for reading into it the idea that Jesus did in fact believe, or that we must believe, that social justice must first of all be established in the community by any methods which the community

may see fit to use, and that when such an order is established the way will be open for the development of an order of love and brotherhood. Such a conception of social evolution is in truth not only not Christian, it is not even religious; it is at bottom the questionable application of a purely secular theory of social evolution. In point of fact, there never has yet been a social order based on justice, and such approximations to it as we have had, have not passed into social orders of goodwill. The theory of the evolution of community from a community of justice based on coercion if need be, into a community based on love, is a theory and nothing more. It is pure guesswork with nothing in history either to suggest or confirm it. What then did Jesus mean by the phrase? We remind ourselves once more that law is the point at which the community as a whole impinges most directly, most completely, and most persistently on the life of the individual. It is the bond of community, the mortar which binds the individual bricks together and makes in the result a society with a definite architecture and shape of its own. Law guarantees the rights which the individual has over against the community, and determines the duties which he owes to it. The rights are guaranteed by mutual self-interest, and the duties are imposed with penalties attached for their non-fulfilment. The last sanctions of law are self-interest and coercion. Jesus accepted the end and aim of the law as inevitable and necessary, but He saw that so long as self-interest—whether that of the individual as over against the community or the interest of one community as over against another—and coercion were made the basis of law, it could never give even what it proposed to give, i.e. true justice and true community. The basis needed to be changed, and He proposed to substitute for the basis of coercion and self-interest the basis of goodwill. Not until that was done could the law fulfil itself,

and it was this that He meant by "fulfilling the law".

He changed the sanctions of law from those of force to those of love, and this love, as we have seen, was to be given and offered to men as men, irrespective of creed, caste, country, or colour.

Christianity from the very first, whilst it began in one particular country and its Founder conceived Himself as being sent to one particular race, had the seeds of universalism in it. It cut right across every artificial frontier and barrier and substituted simple humanity for nationality or religion as the reality towards which men were to orientate themselves in goodwill.

Nor race, nor clime, nor creed Thou knowest,
Wide as the world Thy blessings fall,
The white wings of the Holy Ghost
Unseen, stoop o'er the head of all.

As God took no count of the divisions and distinctions between man in sending His sun and rain, so the disciple was to take all men into his regard: saint and sinner, white and black, cultured and boor; what should matter to the Christian was not what they had, what was the colour of their skin, or with what accent they spoke. The one and only important consideration of which count should and must be taken was that they were men, children of the one same Father, members of the one divine family.

It was this reconceiving of the potentially world-wide community as a family, and of its law as law prescribed and served by goodwill that is the distinctive and fresh element in the teaching of Jesus. Nor did He leave that notion of goodwill hung in mid-air. He spelled it out in considerations which stand half-way between abstract principle and their casuistic application. Primarily, such a community based on goodwill would be a community in which the paramount concern was the human

concern. It would value supremely human well-being, and to that well-being all its activities and institutions would be subservient.

According to Mark the specific question as to whether men or institutions and observances were the most important arose almost at the beginning of his ministry. "And he went into the synagogue at Capernaum on the Sabbath and there was a man there with a withered hand." His question to those who stood by, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" shows that the issue was explicit in His mind. We must bear in mind the enormous importance which the Jew attached to the right observance of the Sabbath. It was his holiest observance, his most sacred institution, and when Jesus healed the man it was His deliberate affirmation that holy as that observance was there was one thing of even greater importance—human welfare.

And as if to leave no doubt about it, the deliberate act was followed up a little later by equally deliberate speech: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Either by itself would have been sufficient, but the act and the word together are coffin nails in the idea of the primacy in community of impersonal realities like observances and institutions. Important as these are there is one thing more important still—the need of men.

He established thereby the principle of the primacy of the specifically human interests in community above all others. Men came first and mattered most. "

The argument now runs *a fortiori*: If a divine ordinance had to give way when human needs were in question, would not mere specifically human institutions? Can we resist the conclusion that if Jesus could say, "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath", much more would He have said that, "Industry was made for man and not man for industry"? And the same with politics.

It is this resolute personalizing, this humanizing of the aims of community and all institutions, this determined refusal to accord primacy to impersonal possessions and achievements which marks the realism of Jesus. For Him it was the fortunes of men in community that mattered. To Jesus, love to man meant, when spelled out in terms of community, a society whose only proper concern was the welfare of the humans who composed the community. All art, all leisure, all industry could only be rightly based, and what was more important, could only function rightly, when human well-being and their effects on human personality were the standards by which they were judged.

More, by this example and by His express word, He stressed the fact that goodwill meant service. The incident of the washing of the disciples' feet in St. John, and the definite injunction that what He had done to them, they must do to others, has a peculiarly synoptic flavour and accent, and may well be the record of an actual incident.

Again, however, we can come back to an early synoptic tradition. When the disciples had discussed amongst themselves who should be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, His reply was "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them . . . and men do them reverence, but it shall not be so amongst you; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief, as he that doth serve". If, as we shall see later on, by this time Christ had turned from the political nation to the Christian fellowship as the community which was to fulfil the conditions of the coming of the Kingdom of God, then clearly two principles are enunciated here.

For the moment we are only concerned with the one relevant to the issue we are discussing. Love in a Christian community meant service, and that, not as an occasional

and private activity, but as the constant and all-pervading expression of the Christian temper. It was not the "leisure" attitude of the Christian, a condition to be manifested when the actual rough and tumble of concrete life was over for the time being, i.e. for evenings and Sundays, but a principle which was to mark the rough and tumble of economic and political life itself.

Once more, we cannot remember our Lord's refusal to drive a wedge in between spirit and matter without being driven to realize that He must have intended the principle of service to work out and manifest itself in the bread-and-butter business of life. St. John, as so often, seized on the heart of the conception: "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but *in our work*, and in truth". Always, everywhere, and in every activity, love must spell itself out in terms of service.

No less clear is the second principle embodied in the same phrase: "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship . . . but it shall not be so amongst you". What is here stated beyond any cavil or question is the denial of the place of external or arbitrary authority in the Christian community. Leadership there must be, but not leadership based on impersonal qualifications such as money, power, social prestige, etc. The only thing which made men great was the reality, extent and whole-heartedness of their service. Does that not imply a fundamental equality? And does not that in turn imply that a truly Christian community is one in which the individual is fully free to pool his goodwill with that of others for the sake of the community? And is not the logic of that the conviction that the most natural form of community to the Christian is that of democracy? Not every democracy is perforce Christian, but where Christian principles work themselves out in industry and politics, do they not mean democratic industry and the democratic

state? The primacy of man, the service of man, and the equality of man, these are the basic principles of community as we find them in the word of Jesus.

We come now to the final question of this chapter. By whom is that Kingdom to be established? At the beginning Jesus clearly held without questioning it the faith that His own nation would be the people who would fulfil the conditions, which would mean that to them would be given the Kingdom. That is the meaning of His summons to repent, and it is the assumption which lies behind the story of the temptation as we have understood it.

It lies no less behind the mission or missions of the disciples. After the temptation and His discernment that no alliance with the politico-religious leaders of His day was possible, Jesus had turned to the common people in the hope that they would make the right response, and at first He had real and substantial hope that what the leaders would not do, the common people would. His hope was confirmed by the reports which His disciples brought back of their reception, and He saw the dethronement of evil in His own people. Gradually, however, that hope waned, and He was forced to the conviction that neither leaders nor led were ready for the Kingdom.

What drove Him from hope to despair is obscure, and we can only guess at the reason. The suggestion of the synoptics is that He was forsaken by the crowd partly because He refused to conform to the conventional Messianic rôle, partly because He made, and would make, no terms with national exclusiveness. In His own city they sought to kill Him for suggesting that other nations might share in the Messianic Kingdom, and they certainly must have been puzzled by one who did all the things which were expected of the Messiah, save one, and that, the vital thing. Portents, signs and wonders were there, but where

was *the* sign? When would He give the sign to rebel against the Roman and triumphantly drive him and his detested legions into the sea? As the months dragged on and the fiery cross was still unlit and the signal not given, there must have been many questions in the minds of those who at first welcomed Him.

The author of the Fourth Gospel is probably not far wide of the mark. It was sheer bewilderment and puzzlement which was responsible for the defection of the multitude. It was their sense of His Messiahship not being completely carried through which led first of all to doubt, then to defection and last of all, to anger. The populace rounded on Him because they could not understand Him. He was an enigma, a puzzle, and He remained so to the last. Their minds were uneasily poised in a "Yes"—"No" attitude which finally crystallized into a definite "No".

Whatever the reason may have been, towards the end of His ministry Jesus clearly made up His mind that His nation would not provide the conditions for the coming of the Kingdom and the unspeakable sadness of the undertone of the parable of the wicked husbandmen and His definite explanation of the meaning of the parable: "I say unto you, 'The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation that bringeth forth the fruits thereof'" is probably only the explicit statement of a conviction to which He had been driven some time before.

And if we have any doubt that Jesus despaired of His own particular racial community, we have only to overhear His heart-broken lament when He first came in sight of Jerusalem on his last journey: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how oft would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you

desolate". In that sentence of doom, human sadness reaches its nadir. Not to His own people, but to another, would be given the Kingdom.

Which was that other nation to whom the Kingdom should be given? We have to take into consideration one marked development and one critical phrase. The development we have to note is a changed attitude to His disciples in the last weeks—perhaps months—of His ministry. Originally they had been occasional evangelists, heralds in the northern towns and villages of Judea, of the Kingdom of God. Now, after His rejection by the crowd, He takes them aside where He can be with them undisturbed by the persecution of the Pharisees or Herod, and untroubled by the populace. That time is spent in training the Twelve. Why? Clearly there was no need for any such teaching, on the theory that Christ went to His death believing that His death would precipitate the Kingdom. The only possible answer, and it is one to which the records bear witness, is that His retirement to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon was for the sake of uninterrupted intercourse with His disciples and for intensive training of them. For what purpose, then, were they to be trained? It must be remembered that the Aramaic word translated "nation" is easily susceptible of being translated "community", "people", and does not necessarily imply the politically created and circumscribed nation as we know it.

It is in that connexion that the phrase to which we have referred above becomes luminous, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom". There can be, we believe, no reasonable doubt that the purpose of the intensive training of the twelve was to fit them to be the community, the "nation" to whom the Kingdom of God would be given. But if that is so, when we arrive at this position, that in His despair of His own particular nation Jesus turned, as an alternative

to it, and as embodying the true, actual and yet ideal community, to the Christian fellowship. *The Christian Fellowship is Christ's alternative to political community. He had ceased to trust to a political community based on race, blood, and self-interest for the inauguration of the Kingdom and now looked to a community based on faith in Himself and loyalty to Himself, organized on the basis of goodwill, as the harbinger and bearer of the principles and conditions which God could answer with the Kingdom of God.* He trusted for the redemption of society to a Christian community—if we choose to state it so, to the Church.

Let us remind ourselves again that He could not and did not think of it as an occasional fellowship, but as a true community, a real society. If we adopt the modern phrasing, social evolution was to be carried forward from a society based on the principle of justice based on law—and whose ultimate sanctions were both penalty and self-interest—to one based on the principle of Law whose ultimate sanctions were goodwill and the well-being of all the family of God, by a Christian fellowship which could only partly be contained within the borders of any given political community.

All the conditions which were characteristic of true community were to be true of the new community—it was to be marked by equality, service, and the predominance of a concern for human as opposed to impersonal interests, and it was essentially transnational in character. And love was to mark every activity of it. It must embody itself at least in economic action—the least that is necessary to create a community—and this economic activity was to be the expression of goodwill.

We leave to a further chapter the study of the terms on which participation in such a society was possible.

CHAPTER IV

OUR CITIZENSHIP IS IN . . . ?

IF our preceding analysis and interpretation of the teaching of Jesus has been a true one, we must look a little more closely at the demands which Jesus made on the individuals who compose the Christian Fellowship. This, we remind ourselves, was intended by Jesus to be a true community in the concrete affairs of life and not an occasional comradeship to be experienced in leisure hours when the serious business of the world was over for the time being.

The question is all the more important because it was on the quality of the personal and direct relationships between members in the community that Jesus made His conception of community turn. It is not too much to say that to a large extent Jesus judged the community by the extent to which it made true relationships possible and by the extent to which it furthered them. By direct personal relationships are meant those relationships into which we men and women enter simply as men and women without any external nexus in the shape of industry, etc. Indirect impersonal relationships are those which we have with each other by virtue of a common interest in an impersonal thing external to us both, i.e. the commercial traveller and his customer are concerned with the particular article which the former wishes to sell and other wishes—or not—to buy.

It is clear this very concern with the quality of direct relationships, which means that the Christian community must be concerned not only with the direct, but also indirect and impersonal relationships, for the latter are not

in fact insulated from the former. Both affect each other. Not infrequently the direct personal relationship affects the indirect impersonal relationship, e.g. when a father uses his own knowledge and prestige to establish his son in business, or when the friendliness of seller and buyer effects a modification from a strictly economic bargain between them.

The more important influence, however, is that of indirect relationship upon direct. The fact that two friends—especially in an economic crisis—have been in competition for the same amount of business, has been known before now to break the friendship. The writer thinks of a case directly known to him in which by his superior industrial flair and capacity for organization a younger man drove the older out of business, with the upshot that the erstwhile friendship between the two was utterly destroyed. And, in a less dramatic and more humdrum scene, the amount of wages coming into an ordinary home has a profound effect on the direct relationship of those within it. Perhaps the saddest tragedy of unemployment has been its effect on multitudes of homes, especially of the “black-coated” unemployed. Circumstances which formerly were easy, if no more than that, have suddenly become straitened and difficult with the result of new tension amongst those within it. The first influence of adversity upon, say, husband and wife, is to draw them closer together but as day succeeds day and weeks stretch out into months and the stringency becomes more acute, the mental and spiritual strain increases, little incidents are magnified into great offences, tempers become touchy and the whole relationship of husband and wife steadily degenerates.

Nor is the effect of indirect relationships upon direct confined to those exercised by the medium of money only. The emotional ‘set’ of an indirect relationship may react

back upon the direct in such wise as to change their whole character. The following is a true record of an actual case: A girl of seventeen in a woollen mill, had for her over-looker a peculiarly hectoring and loud-voiced man, a nigger-driver of the worst type. It was not long before the girl began to show herself refractory at home. She grew moody and morose, and in the end threatened to commit suicide, from which on one occasion she was only restrained by force. What had happened was clear, and the removal of the girl to another shed and happier conditions, and the consequent restoration of the girl to her normal bright happy self, proved it. The fear engendered by the overlooker in the indirect relationship had been carried over into her direct relationships. Secretly mistrustful of herself, she sought to compensate for it by self-assertion in the family. At the same time, her deep-seated fear made her suspect the attitudes and advances of others, and she came to believe that every one was engaged in a conspiracy against her. The moodiness and despair of which we have spoken were the result. The whole of her direct relationships were poisoned because of a wrong indirect relationship.

It is impossible, therefore, to insulate direct relationships from indirect. The human personality is one and indivisible and the wound it receives in one aspect of itself, reacts on every other. For abstract thinking the two may be separated, but only for abstract thinking. In concrete personality they are indissolubly joined, and a score of connexions, some of them unconscious, link the two together so that the life current in the one passes into the other. To separate them, or to imagine that either can be handled in such a way that it will not affect the other, is to commit as grave and ultimately as destructive an error as the customary religious separation of spirit and matter, of the individual and the community.

Christianity, therefore, whilst its main concern is with direct personal relationships, is compelled to take account of and judge the indirect, impersonal relationships of economics and politics. What we discovered in our previous chapter, to wit, that Jesus was definitely concerned with economics and politics and with the human relationships they both express and create, is thus confirmed by experience and by an examination of the actual situation in which real men constantly find themselves. If the indirect relationships further such qualities as make for true personal relationships, and put a premium on them, then Christianity can gladly set its seal on them; contrariwise, against indirect relationships which put a premium on such qualities as destroy true direct relationships and make them difficult or impossible, a Christianity which is loyal to its own spirit and wise to its own interests will declare unceasing war. The question, therefore, as to the kind of individual who alone rightfully belongs to the Christian Fellowship, and the characteristic qualities and activities which he brings to that fellowship, is all important.

There are, according to Jesus, two governing considerations. First of all men are to repeat in their own relations with one another what they know are the relations of God with them. That is the unequivocal teaching of the parable of the Two Debtors. "I forgave thee all thy debts, shouldst thou not also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?" Few things in the teaching of Jesus stand out in sharper and bolder relief than His insistence that a man's true relations with his fellows are only a recapitulation, an echo, of God's relationship with himself.

More, the double relationship with God and man cut both ways; it worked backward as well as forward. A man's failure to adopt a true relationship to this brother

meant that God would not adopt in His turn, the desired relationship between Himself and man. "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses." Forgiveness is not an optional act lying at the circumference of the Christian message and the Christian life. It is its very heart and soul, its fixed and immovable centre. But forgiveness is the supreme moral demand on man, as it is the hardest to meet in practice. When, therefore, Jesus makes this implacable demand for forgiveness, it carries with it every other demand. What God shows Himself to be to the individual, the individual must be to his fellows.

The second ruling consideration is that of discipleship. Membership in a Christian fellowship implies going to school with Christ, it involves becoming a pupil, a learner.

To discipleship two further conditions attach themselves, practical obedience and self-negation. Jesus never failed to insist that the tests of discipleship were severely practical. No formal adherence to conventional observances, no merely intellectual persuasion of evangelical—or any—truth would serve, only practical obedience. "Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, or in thy name done many wonderful works?" "I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity." Not even a personal allegiance to Himself would avail at the last to serve those who had not fulfilled His demands. "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" "Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as, ye did it not unto the least of these, ye did it not unto me, and these shall go away into everlasting punishment."

It is a strain which constantly recurs in the teaching of Jesus. "By their fruits ye shall know them." He sums it up explicitly in His story of the house that fell and the house that stood. It is the solemn close of the Sermon on

the Mount. "Whoso heareth these words of mine and doeth them, I will like him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these words of mine and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall thereof." The Christian life in the community is first and last and all the time, a life of obedience. It is primarily a master loyalty.

The second condition which attaches to discipleship is that of denial of self, of "self-noughting" to use a late medieval term. "Whosoever would come after me, let him say 'No' to himself and take up his cross and follow me." "If any man . . . hate not himself, he cannot be my disciple." Jesus, in accordance with a not infrequent Jewish and Aramaic usage, employs the strong word 'hate' to denote an attitude which is so completely secondary to another that it can almost be described as its opposite. Far above and beyond anything else, Jesus demanded love toward Himself so complete that a man's attitude to himself could be described as 'hate'. There is no mistaking what He means. It is not the surrender of a few things which a man enjoys, or a few goods which he possesses; it is the surrender, not of what a man has, but of what a man is. It is his demand for the full and complete domination of life by God, and by the great paradox of religion, the meeting of that demand would issue in a true personality. On the other hand, the attempt to retain one's own interests as the dominant individual concern would mean the destruction of true personality. "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it, but whosoever would lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it."

And that surrender was to be complete to the point of willingness to face death. Every Christian disciple packs a cross in his knapsack. "Except a man say 'No' to himself and take up his cross . . ." In other words, Christ asks from the disciple in his obedience, exactly the same soldierly faith and devotion which is asked of every soldier in battle. A man must be prepared to give even life itself for the Kingdom of God, as the rank and file of the army are to give it for the political community. He has a clear and definite trust which he must not betray for whatever reward, and to which he must be loyal at whatever cost. And we wrong both the teaching of Christ and ourselves and our fellows when we try to disguise that or whittle discipleship down to easier terms.

What then is the Christian trust? In turn, this breaks up into two questions—the trust which the community has as a whole, and the trust which the individuals in the community have one to another as exemplifying true Christian relations.

We deal with the latter aspect first. How does the selfless, God-centred life manifest itself in its relations both with God and man? The answer to that question is largely to be found in the Sermon on the Mount. Here we pause to make two comments. One's first impression as one reads it through is that it puts a premium on the softer and more passive virtues, and as a matter of fact it has often been charged against Christianity that it fails in masculinity and exalts and perpetuates a servile and mawkish morality. And it has frankly to be admitted that sometimes it has been so interpreted and so accepted. Morality may spring out of a man's strength or out of his weakness and the morality of strength may be parodied and imitated by the morality of weakness. So it is with the Sermon on the Mount, especially with the Beatitudes. There is a pooriness in spirit, a meekness, a mercifulness, a peaceableness

which derive from lack of personality; men may manifest these qualities because they have no capacity to do or to be otherwise. It is therefore firmly to be borne in mind that He who first made these demands and lived them out in His own life, was first and foremost a man of courage and whose first condition of discipleship is strength of will and character. The Beatitudes therefore imply strength, they pre-suppose personality at its maximum, not its minimum—strong, vigorous, tenacious, and determined.

The second comment we have to make is that the adjective "blessed" belongs especially to the world of Messianic conceptions and has especially to do with life in the Divine Kingdom. Perhaps the best paraphrase we can give of it is "the settled habit of rejoicing in life".

In the Beatitudes, therefore, and in the Sermon on the Mount as a whole, we have the statement of how a strong and determined personality will express itself in true community in such wise that all personal relationships will be a source of perennial joy.

As it stands, the exact shade of meaning to be given to the first Beatitude has to be determined by reference to His teaching as a whole. It might mean, that just as the poor possess nothing but have everything yet to gain, so a man who was really a Christian, however much he might have attained in the way of spiritual experience and goodness, would be sure that compared with what he had yet to experience and become, his present experience and attainments were as nothing. Remembering, however, that the Beatitudes deal for the most part with personal relations either between an individual and his community, we shall probably give it the interpretation nearest to what our Lord meant if we see in it an injunction to actual self-identification with the lot of the poor. It has to do with that imaginative sympathy which can cross the artificial frontiers of status and possession and enter into the very

thoughts, feelings and aspirations of the poor. It was self-portraiture which Jesus gave us in the Beatitudes; when every line has been drawn it is His face which emerges, and it rightly starts at the point which was so characteristic of Himself—His self-identification with the poor and needy. But why "*poor* in spirit" with the stress on the adjective? Is it not because Jesus saw in the poor not merely those who needed compassion, but those who should possess the Kingdom? St. Luke, who gives us an alternative, may be the original, version of some of the Beatitudes, so understands it—"Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God". It is as though Jesus saw in the mind of the poor something which had peculiar affinities with the Spirit of the Kingdom. Such an announcement was—and still is—revolutionary. Hardly anything was more firmly embedded in the mind of the average Jew than that prosperity was a sign of the favour of God, and even to-day the unconscious assumption of many Christians is the same. "God has been very good in prospering me in my business" is a testimony given me over and over again at meetings for witness, etc. To those who heard Jesus, it must have seemed as though the Beatitude turned upside down the accepted order of things, and especially to the classes in possession must have sounded a direct threat to their position—an impression deepened by Our Lord's ineradicable suspicion of wealth. To us the Beatitude sounds innocuous, but anything more highly charged with at once religious and social explosive it would be hard to conceive.

The second Beatitude is concerned in all probability, not with those in sorrow for their own unhappy lot, but for those who wept for Judea's national position, and especially for the sin to which that position was due. It has in mind the condition, not of individual, but of the community. Its meaning is perfectly clear. It is a thrust

at the nationalism which says, "My country, right or wrong". Behind it there lies the assumption that nations themselves are judged at the bar of a higher tribunal than that of their own prosperity and power; that nationality itself can only survive as the servant of the purpose of God. Happy is that man, says Jesus, who brings to his national or community life that standard of judgment.

In the conception of meekness the Beatitudes find their point of climax. Each of them implies certain resistances which can in fact only be made by men of strong character. In the first, the resistance which has to be offered is to oneself and to one's sense of pride, difference and superiority. In the second it is the crowd mind and its pressure which has to be withstood. If the first is aimed at the self-assertive instinct, and the second at the herd-instinct, the third is aimed at the self-preservative instinct. What shall one do when violence is offered either to body or to reputation? Here Jesus makes a demand which stands side by side with the demand for forgiveness as the hardest demand in Christianity. The instinct of self-preservation lies deepest of all in human hearts and its claim is insistent beyond that of any other. When attacked, its rebound upon the attacker is retaliation, and the retaliation has behind it all the drive and force of the instinct. Only one whose self-control is absolute, who is completely master in his own house of life, can hold that instinct in check.

What the Beatitude lays its emphasis on is that spiritual "fitness" which holds in check and curbs and controls every impulse. Anything less like the flabby amiability with which it has often been confused it would be impossible to conceive. The picture it suggests is that of a well-trained athlete in perfect control of every muscle, and of all his reserves. Mr. Rudyard Kipling's story of "The

ship that found herself " exactly hits off the idea in Christ's mind. After the storm every nut and bolt, every plate and rib and all the parts of the ship and its engines worked together in complete harmony under the control of the captain on the bridge. It is that conception of a close-knit, disciplined personality which Jesus puts into His conception of " the meek ".

The next Beatitude is usually translated, " Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness ", but the last word is probably better translated " justice ". In that word two conceptions meet, on the one hand there is the ordinary conception of the distributive justice which seeks to hold the balance even between man and man. A new element comes in, however. As we have already seen, respect for personality is fundamental to the teaching of Jesus. Man is a child of God and the justice which Jesus emphasises is the idea of respect for that. It demands regard for individuality as being by nature a son of God with latent possibilities of full moral sonship. Its demand is that that divine element or aspect of human personality should not be thwarted, stunted or denied. " Blessed," says Jesus, are they who have a concern to further and develop that and who reverence human personality and treat it as a sacred thing.

The fifth Beatitude exactly reverse the situation of the disciple implied by the third. There the disciple was confronted with the possibility of an inquiry being inflicted on him; here he is in the position of being able to commit an injury, albeit with perfect justice, as men count justice. He is in the position of asking for a pound of flesh which is his by bond, and in demanding which he is perfectly within his rights. Yet to exact this pound of flesh will inflict injury on the debtor. What then shall the disciple do? When a man, possibly even an enemy, is within one's power, what shall one do? ' Shew mercy ' is the answer

of Jesus, and once more the thought we have already been considering, that the relations of man to his fellows affect God's relationship to himself makes its appearance—"for they shall obtain mercy".

In the sixth Beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart", He sums up all that have gone before. It does much more than demand purity in the sense of sexual cleanness, though that is included in it. What it rather stresses is the heart cleansed from all admixture with and adulteration by illicit instincts and motives. As we have already seen, each of the preceding Beatitudes is aimed at a definite instinct to be resisted at all costs. It is the heart cleansed of all these instincts—regarded as serving self-interest—of which Jesus is thinking. St. Paul's word "simplicity" comes nearest to its meaning—the simplification of outlook and aims which comes from the domination of life by a master passion.

The last two Beatitudes have to do with broken normal human relationships, in the first case, broken normal, human relationships between individuals or communities other than the individual concerned. Its sets the warranty of Christ on the achievement of peace, and puts peace amongst the supremely desirable ideals both for individuals or communities. The characteristic Christian achievement is peace, and once more it must have sounded in the ears of a good many of the leaders and populace something very like treason to the national hopes and aims.

Is that why the last Beatitude with its grave warning comes where it does? Was there an impatient movement in the crowd, a growl of disapproval and resentment which He overheard? In any event, with His realistic outlook, He could not be unaware that what He had said cut right into the roots of the prevalent individual and national temper and convictions. And that same realism prevented Him from being oblivious to the fact that much opposition

would involve persecution. He would carry through this revolution, but now He warned His disciples that the blood which would be shed would be their own, and not that of their opponents. So it falls slowly, solemnly from his lips, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake". "Blessed are ye when man shall persecute and revile you". The shadow of Everyman's cross is flung athwart the Christian message from the very beginning.

Once more the figure of the soldier comes to our mind. As men count themselves happy to suffer danger, dirt and even death for their country, so the disciple was to count himself happy in bearing his share of difficulty and pain for the sake of the Kingdom.

To sum it all up, the Christian disciple is one who is in full command of himself and whose dominant and creative centre is the spirit of love. To goodwill every instinct and impulse within him has been brought into subjection. Such personalities, said Jesus, would be the salt of the earth, its preservative principle, and then He added that if for any reason the salt lost its savour—Christian discipleship, its characteristic note and obedience—men would turn upon it and tread it under foot.

Nor was that new principle of strength, harnessed, not to the instincts of self-preservation and self-assertion, but to love, to be kept and held in secret as an esoteric doctrine and private attitude. It was to be set forth boldly and openly; men were almost to flaunt it in the face of the world; they were to be like cities set on a hill, or candles on a candlestick—a refuge for the oppressed and distressed, an illumination flooding God's light on all dark places of life. It would inevitably mean for him who acted, persecution, possibly death; to repeat a former phrase, every disciple packed a cross—the punishment for rebellion—in his knapsack, and the strength which manifested itself in self-mastery and in love would be called in

in the final resort, to show itself in an unflinching courage. The Beatitudes are in truth marching orders, and their background and foreground are both alike—conflict and warfare. They are a battle-piece etched in by Christ himself.

The rest of the Sermon on the Mount is little more than a completion and rounding off of the Beatitudes. At every point they deal with direct personal relations and they illustrate the nature of religion as a whole. All this strong, loving personality is set against the background of direct personal relations with God. Men are to pray; they are to rest in complete freedom from worry in the assurance of God's care. They are to find their strength in their certainty of God and in their communion with Him. Yet always the balance is held even. The observance of religious forms is secondary; it is real action in the actual world which is the final standard of judgment, but always action from genuine motive. Men may say the right words of prayer and do the prescribed deeds of mercy, but unless the right motive is behind it all, it is no more than play-acting in religion. Formal worship is useless if one leaves unremedied the legitimate grievance of a brother against him. Criticism for the sake of criticism is forbidden and, further, it invites judgment on the critic himself. The most royal generosity is enjoined and the most complete refusal to resist violence.

Whatever Christians may have made of the Sermon on the Mount, here is no creed for tame idealists, but a trumpet call for men who mean business. And clearly He did not hold up these ideals as possibilities which might perhaps be realizable at some day in the future when conditions were favourable. He did not post-date His demands to a time when they would be easy. They were to be lived out here and now; the disciple was to manifest his citizenship in a real and existing community,

and that community was the Christian fellowship. It would mean collision with the existing order of community, and in that collision the disciple would suffer. Jesus never promised to make religion easy; He only promised that when men would face up to its demand, that it would be successful—the Kingdom would come. At times He seems to have doubted whether men would stand up to its high challenge, though His doubt—"When the Son of Man cometh he shall find faith on the earth?"—seems to belong to the period when He was clinging to His hope that the nation might yet repent and become the instrument of the inauguration of the Kingdom of God. At the last He seems to have been quite sure that in the Christian Fellowship He had forged a weapon which would not break and would usher in the triumphant reign of God. "Death and hell should not prevail against it."

In that phrase many find an illicit assurance. Christ called the Christian Fellowship into being, the argument runs; therefore nothing can overthrow and destroy it. We may well believe indeed that no simply external attack can destroy it; but our Lord's own words concerning savourless salt should be warning enough, that what external enmity cannot do, internal disloyalty may. The warning of the history of Israel should be enough to remind us that a community exists for just so long as it fulfils the purpose for which it was called into being by God, and no longer. Its continued existence is always conditional; there is always an "if" in it—"If thou wilt obey the voice of the Lord thy God". Once the institution forgets its main purpose and substitutes for it any lower motive such as its own prestige or prosperity, it signs its own death warrant.

The grave question which many, not only outside the Church but within its borders are asking, is "Has the Church lost its savour?" Has it parted company with the

very purposes for which it was brought into being? What if this be the last hour, and the Church is being given a final chance of repentance to recover its first love and its specific witness? What if Christ find, not faith as He understood it, but only a parody of faith in His Church? What if in the near future the ancient words are repeated once more—"Behold the Kingdom is taken away from you and given to a nation that bringeth forth the fruits thereof".

Before we discuss the specific thing which is the Church's trust, however, we have to face a prior question which forms the natural transition from individual discipleship to communal.

It was part of the realism of Jesus that side by side with His statement of the conditions of discipleship He set no less plainly His judgment as to the things which prevented such discipleship, or militated against it. We shall find that they are three in number, two internal and having their stronghold in the Christian himself, the other external. *Sin* could keep men out of the Kingdom and so could *fear*; these are the two internal causes of failure. The external cause which made it next to impossible for men to enter the Kingdom was *wealth*. Jesus shared with all the prophets a deep sense of the horror of sin, both individual and social. In all probability He accepted without question the belief of His contemporaries of the existence of the "yetzer hara", the evil imagination in every man. For Him, the great thing to dread, because it alienated a man from God and rendered his citizenship in the Kingdom of God impossible, was sin. Yet no one can read far in the Gospels without realizing that Jesus, because of the specific angle from which He viewed life, saw that the dangerous sins were not the sins which men have been accustomed to rank the worst and count the most heinous.

The truth is that our æsthetic and our moral judgments lie close one to another and they so affect one another that the one can easily be mistaken for the other. On the positive side we often mistake for a religious experience what is in reality nothing more than an æsthetic experience. We mistake the vestibule for the temple itself. On the negative side our æsthetic judgments lend their weight to our moral judgments so that sins which have an element of repulsiveness in them appear to be unusually gross and vicious. That is why the sins of the flesh, sordid and mean, always tend to appear the sins par excellence, and why, therefore, the condemnation of them has always had a foremost place in the anathemas of good people.

Yet Jesus, the complete realist, knew that where the sins of the flesh slay their thousands, the sins of the spirit slay their tens of thousands. From the ugliness of bestiality and sex-licence His whole soul must have shrunk back in horror, yet He seems to have treated harlots with infinite tenderness. He even dared to say—and few words of Jesus could have more rudely disturbed the self-complacency of the Pharisees or roused their anger against Him more thoroughly—"Verily I say unto you, the publicans and harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you". He saw the danger point at a higher stage of moral development. It was when men were already 'good' that they were in peril. And the reason is plain.

The gross sins have their own safeguard in the social opprobrium which the one who commits them incurs. Not so the sins of the spirit. They are less æsthetically repulsive and so are not in themselves as æsthetic facts, repellent to general opinion. The real reason for their dangerousness lies deeper, however, and is to be found in the fact that they are in part created by and creative of

the secular political society. *It was their social influence in still further corrupting community* which made them, in the eyes of Jesus, especially deadly.

That explains the paradox which must strike every open-eyed reader of the Gospels, that Jesus peoples Gehenna with good ten-commandment-morality people—sometimes even with professing disciples themselves.

It is impossible, for example, to read the parable of the Good Samaritan without feeling the supreme artistry with which the spotlight falls on priest and Levite,—both good men as we count goodness—and the unspoken but powerful suggestion that whilst the Samaritan had gained eternal life, they had lost it. And on occasion Jesus was downright and explicit. Those who were unreal in their religion, those who failed to work to capacity in their service of the Kingdom, those who were formal, hard-hearted and selfish, those even who professed to love Him but were deaf to the call of human need, all these according to Jesus were cast into Gehenna. Deadly sin for Jesus meant pride, the lust for power and prestige, indifference to actual human misery, laziness and unreality. All these are typical values of community based on coercion and self-interest, and Jesus lashed them as He did because He saw them poisoning the body politic still further. And the heart of every one of these sins is self-regard. On them He pronounced inexorable doom in terms from which there is no appeal.

Yet, on exactly the same level with sin and equally potent to keep men out of the full free exercise of their citizenship in the Kingdom, and equally effective in cutting men off from God, was *fear*. Warnings against it occupy a definite place in the Sermon on the Mount and it is implied in His stress on the Fatherhood of God. He strove eagerly to combat it, and His chief instrument for the achievement of that end was to hold God up as

utterly trustworthy and utterly loving. God sent His rain on the just and the unjust, He clothed the lilies of the field; not a sparrow fell to the ground without the Father. In the boat on the storm-driven lake He asks His disciples, "Why are ye so fearful?"—which means much more than, "What are you afraid of?"

How eagerly and how often He pleads for faith and utter trust in God. "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." In dealing with fear He was dealing with a real situation. Then, as now, there were all the accidents of birth and death, of life that lay between the two, and the fears to which they gave rise, to be taken note of. Added to that there was the emotional pressure of an uncertain national destiny and the all too certain reality of heavy taxation and economic conditions almost as perplexing and oppressive as those of our own day. Had Jesus not dealt with the problem of fear He would have left untouched an emotional issue which as clearly called for remedy as the moral.

Jesus, however, never condemns fear or lashes it as He does sin. It is as though He felt that it was something for which man's will was not responsible. For it, His remedy was both God and the Holy Community. It was by the complete committal of life to God that the nerve of fear would be cut. That was true of all fears of life, but especially true of the cosmic fears which beset our mortal passage through life. In the complete committal of life to an all-loving God was to be found the antidote to fear.

No less obviously the creation of the Holy Community the visible Kingdom of God would remove the ground of the fears which arose from maladjustments in society. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness (justice) and all these things shall be added unto you."

Trust in God and the creation of a new community together would rob life of its terrors.

Nor should these be separated in the answer of Jesus. Fear is largely the product of self-centredness and self-interest. It is because we are so concerned with what is happening to ourselves that fear grips and dominates us; it swells with our self-regard, and just as an inflated toy balloon is more vulnerable than one not yet blown up, so the larger our self-esteem and self-regard, the larger the target we offer for "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune". It is not until we find some interest so wide and large that it captures our attention and drains off attention from ourselves that fear ceases to grip us. The soldier who, idling his time away in the trenches, has ample room in which to experience in imagination all the many ways in which wounds, perhaps even death itself, will come to him, in the actual heat and dust of the battle may not even feel the real wound he suffers.

So it is with life. It is idle preoccupation with self which is the most fruitful source of fear; when we are actively engaged in a big issue, which "takes us out" of ourselves, life seems much less terrifying. Such a big issue Jesus offered to men in the conception of the Kingdom of God. Until men could get rid of self they could not be rid of fear; if, therefore, life was given wholly over to God in trust and obedience, fear would no longer have any dominion over men.

We come now to the last of the three conditions which Jesus said made discipleship difficult—*wealth*. In part, His attitude to it may have been determined or at least influenced by the attitude of the well-to-do to Himself, but it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Jesus saw in the mere possession of wealth a fact which was fraught with grave danger to Christian personality. The first note is sounded in the Magnificat. "He hath filled the hungry with good

things and the rich he hath sent away empty". And, as we have seen, it is implied in the first Beatitude.

The story of the rich man and Lazarus points the same moral, for there is no hint in it that Dives was either wicked or hard-hearted. It was his wealth which damned him. Part of the interpretation of the parable of the sower has to do with the "deceitfulness of riches which choke the word", and in the series of "Woes" in Luke VI, we read: "Woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto ye that are full, for ye shall hunger".

The classic passage is, of course, our Lord's comment on the rich young ruler who, when bidden to sell all that he had and give to the poor and follow Jesus, "went away sorrowful for he had great possessions". "Verily, I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter the Kingdom of Heaven. It is easier for a camel (rope?) to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God". His further reply to the disciples when they asked who in that case could be saved, was to the effect that it was only by the power of God that they could enter the Kingdom at all.

The prospect of gaining riches was, to the true disciple, a prospect which would keep him awake o' nights. Wealth itself was the enemy, and a man would view its coming with the very gravest misgiving. That a man should possess it was not good but bad fortune, a heavy handicap.

We must seek the reason for that judgment in the fact that wealth tends to wean personality from God and from the practice of the virtues which Jesus saw were necessary for true citizenship in the Kingdom, and set vibrating those very impulses which had no place in it. The apparent solidity and reality of wealth might easily give rise to a greater trust in itself than in God. To keep "poor in

spirit" would be difficult if one was always living in another atmosphere. Wealth might easily identify a man completely with his community and prevent him being a mourner, whilst the temptation to use the power it put into his hands made "meekness" more difficult. Single-mindedness was next to impossible if half one's vigilance were needed to keep one's wealth, and a passion for justice might easily be adulterated and thinned out if the claims of justice and wealth came into conflict.

That same almost inevitable necessity of defending wealth was a foe to the peaceable spirit, and the softness produced by comfort and luxury would make the possessor of them unwilling to endure persecution. On every count wealth was to be dreaded by those who were concerned for the Kingdom; one could not be a citizen of the Holy Community without detachment from preoccupation with mere possessions. Wealth made this detachment next to impossible, and therefore Jesus could not but condemn it, or, if 'condemnation' be too strong a word, to regard it with grave suspicion.

The final picture we get of the Holy Community, the Christian fellowship, is therefore that of a community of relatively poor people and one in which direct, personal relationships of love are possible. Those direct relationships determine the indirect relationships, i.e. industrial and political relationships take their tone and temper from them. The final determinant of the form of true community is, therefore, not that of economic pressure, but the direct relationship of men. And the Kingdom of God as community is served only by those in whom the Kingdom of God exists as the core and matrix of individual personality.

It follows from what we have said that since the direct relationships of love are the determinant of not only the form but the tone and temper of the community as a

whole, that the characteristic of the Christian community as a whole is that of goodwill. Jesus had nothing in common with what is now commonly regarded and is often put forward by Christian thinkers as the true theory of social evolution, to wit, that some day when we have achieved a community of justice whose last sanctions are force and self-interest it will pass easily and insensibly over into a community of love based on goodwill and service. His doctrine is exactly opposite that only a community based on goodwill can assure and secure justice. Whether He came to it by intuition, or whether He came to it by observation of the facts, He saw that society as He knew it had come to a dead-end, a full stop, and that the limits of achievements by coercive political community had been reached. If the next stage—in His view the final stage—was to be reached, it could only be by the introduction of a new social principle in a new community.

That new community, as we have seen, was the Christian fellowship, and that new trust was the trust of love as the principle of community. He never pretended that such a principle or such a community could be as acceptable to the secular political community. On the contrary, he said expressly that it would not fit in, and that political community would strain every nerve to crush it. The members of it would be brought before kings and rulers for His Name's sake, and they would be hated of all men. Every moment the existence of the Christian fellowship would be in jeopardy and the Christian would be compelled to live dangerously.

Yet He provided the assurance that such a fellowship, whilst it would be in peril on every hand, in the end would triumph. It would provide the conditions for the coming of the Kingdom of God. The price of success was firm adherence to the trust committed to them, the trust of

love; on the other hand, to barter that away whether for the "success" of the Church *qua* institution, or for popularity, would be to be as salt that has lost its savour. It would be cast on to the rubbish heap of all those historic institutions which paid the penalty of disloyalty by destruction. The Church, the Christian Fellowship, like the individual could only keep its soul alive by being willing to lose it; the very attempt to preserve itself would compass its own death.

We can now sum up the arguments of this chapter and the preceding. Jesus refused to separate either spirit and matter or the individual and community. The Kingdom of God was to be a real community and not a spiritual fellowship simply. The Kingdom was God's own gift, but the conditions for its coming were to be created by a true community. At first, He believed that His own nation would fulfil the conditions, but afterwards He looked to the Christian community as alone providing the conditions. *The Christian Fellowship is Christ's alternative to political society and should provide the true expression of community life.*

It was to be a real community, economic as well as spiritual, and its characteristics were to be determined by the direct relations of persons in whose individual lives the "Rule of God" as Love had been wholeheartedly accepted. The test of the community would be its regard for human welfare. Such a community would not square with political community, and the Christian disciple must expect persecution.

*Jesus trusted for the redemption of society not so much to the influence of Christian individuals working in and through the existing political communities, as to the challenge of another community, itself organized on a basis of love and regard for personality. That community had as its *raison d'être* the expression of love and it had no*

other reason for its existence. With these principles in our mind it is now possible to determine what is the relationship of Christianity to Communism and Fascism, and further, it becomes imperative to ask how far and in what degree the Church is faithful to its trust.

CHAPTER V

CHOPPING LOGIC

WE are now in a position to compare and contrast the underlying conceptions of community as exemplified in Christianity, Communism and Fascism, and such a comparison may be tabulated as follows:

	CHRISTIANITY	COMMUNISM	FASCISM
1. ULTIMATE PRINCIPLE	The Creative spirit of God	Self-evolving matter	Life-force morally neutral. Libidinalism
2. FINAL CONCERN	Well-being of both individual and community	Well-being of both individual and community	Well-being of Race-State
3. THE DETERMINANT OF SOCIAL PROCESS	The will of God consciously apprehended by individuals and embodied in a fellowship	Economic determinism and dialectical materialism	Instinctive forces
4. METHOD	Goodwill expressing itself in service	Goodwill expressing itself in service	Coercion
5. TIME-SCHEME	Development issuing in crisis	Development issuing in crisis	None
6. MEANS	Love	Love between members of the same class, but force to be employed against other classes in time of crisis	Force
7. SCOPE	Transnational and missionary	Transnational and missionary	Race

What we are concerned with in this comparison is not an official State attitude to religion whether for or against. The question is not whether the State technically recognizes the existence of God and the Church or not, but it has to do with the affinities or differences, the similarities or oppositions of their creative, working hypotheses and their expression of these in actual life. By this, and by this alone can the Christian truly judge them, and, be it added, by its practice of its own convictions is modern Christianity to be judged. The appeal is taken out of the all-too-partial sphere of self-interest, or even of unconscious defence of the *status quo* whether in economics, politics or religion, and is made directly to the judgment by reason as to which of the three offers the more consistent explanation of reality.

We have to begin by reminding ourselves that each in point of fact considers itself for the most part to be in opposition to the other two. Fascism, as it has come to consciousness, if hardly clear expression in the work of Rosenberg, is plainly in opposition to Christianity. The "new paganism" of Germany is perfectly frank that Christianity is a degrading Semitic myth wholly unsuited to the Nordic mind and temper. If German and Italian Fascism recognize religion it is because both are realistic and opportunist in politics, and are fully aware that to incur the hostility of religion is to court political disaster. And as we shall see, between the fundamental persuasions and method of the Fascist and those of the Christian there is almost complete opposition. The Fascist pays tribute to it with his lips in order that people may be kept quiet and so that he may be the more completely able to deny religion in life. His very recognition of religion provides him, in fact, with wider scope for doing the things which most effectually destroy it. He says the right words that he may do the wrong deeds. "And the father said to the

elder, 'Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.' And he said, 'I go, sir,' and went not."

Fascism regards itself as being no less the foe of Communism, indeed as we have seen, it was in part the reaction from Communism. It sees in the domination of economic and political life by the proletariat, the very epitome and embodiment of evil. With Communism there can be neither armistice, nor treaty, nor quarter, nor peace. And Communism repays that hatred with interest. It knows that the triumph of Fascism spells the end of Communism. Both are persuaded that Communism and Fascism cannot stay in the world together.

Nor, according to the Communist, can Christianity and Communism. He sees in religion man's defence mechanism against fears of which he should have rid himself by the strength of his own right arm. Christianity, it holds, is an escape into the realm of phantasy or illusion, and therefore detracts attention from practical effort to solve real problems; above everything else, it is the tool and instrument of the capitalist class. Before, therefore, the whole will of a people can be harnessed to the real task of creating true community, religion must go. Communism has to fight on the double front of Fascism and Religion. So also with Christianity. It conceives itself to be in opposition to both Communism and Fascism, though in both cases there is frequently an economic factor or a political in the general Christian judgment. It is difficult not to feel that the wide publicity given in this country to the Russian Anti-God Campaign drew, and draws a good deal of its fervour and appeal from the fact that the Christians who so passed judgment had identified themselves consciously or unconsciously, with the industrial régime in this country and America. Under the guise of religion it was the Communist conception of industry which was being stalked.

Similarly, the "pure" religious judgment on Fascism, both German and Italian, may not have been uninfluenced by the fact that Christianity largely identifies itself with the present form of Government, i.e. political parliamentary democracy.

We are then presented with an issue which smacks of the logic of *Alice in Wonderland*. It is a triangle of enmity in which each hates the other pair, who in turn profess to hate one another. Therefore two of them must always be in alliance and yet in opposition to each other at the same time. If we begin with Christianity we get an argument somewhat as follows: Christianity is contradictory to Fascism which in turn is contradictory to Communism, therefore Christianity and Communism are in alliance. But Communism is the sworn foe of Christianity, therefore Christianity is at once the friend and foe of Communism. In the same way, it may be shown that in strict logic each ought to be helping and hindering the other two at the same time. Communism ought not to oppose Christianity because Fascism is the sworn enemy of both. And so on. We cannot, therefore, deduce anything at all from their explicit and practical attitudes.

In order to discover their fundamental affinities and repulsions we have to go back to ultimate and basic principles. We have, we hope, said enough to pre-empt the denial that Christianity is a religion whilst Communism and Fascism are economic-political communities. If Christianity is primarily discipleship, as its Founder declared it was, then it must, as we have seen, embody itself in a community and the real question at issue is "Which is the true community?" Christianity cannot plead therefore that it is in a position of judge or arbiter and is above the battle. With what measure it judges it must itself be judged. It must apply to itself the foot-rule it applies to others.

Nor should it be assumed off-hand that the bitterest struggle will be between those whose principles are furthest apart. It may well be, that if any two of them have in common a large body of principle and to a large extent a common aim, then the struggle between those two will be the bitterest of all, since both will be fighting for the allegiance of, broadly speaking, the same constituency.

An almost exact analogy is found in the attitude of Labour to the Liberal and Conservative parties in this country. The fight between Labour and Liberal has been marked by an added touch of acerbity, just because both have sought the votes of the same progressively minded people. To anticipate our conclusion somewhat, the fact that Communism and Christianity have so many convictions in common and largely a common aim, means that either they must make terms with one another, or the struggle between them will be peculiarly bitter and prolonged. They appeal too strongly to the same hopes and ideals in men, they compete too sharply for the adherence of the same mental type to preclude anything but frank recognition of each other, or equally frank opposition.

We have already indicated that when their basic principles are examined, the sharpest and most irreconcilable opposition is between Christian principles and Fascist, and that for that very reason the struggle may be sharpest between Christianity and Communism. We have now to justify the former statement. On looking at the comparative table at the beginning of this chapter, it will be seen that at no point is there any agreement between the two, and that at every point there is the most clean-cut opposition.

We take the points *seriatim*, at the moment merely indicating the reality of the opposition and the grounds thereof, leaving to the discussion on the relations between Christianity and Communism the vindication of the

Christian position. The creative principle of community, the Fascist asserts, is the Life-force, the libido, which is morally neutral, and by this both the reality and the particular form of community is determined. The Christian conviction, on the other hand, is that the creation of true community is the conscious purpose of One, Who, so far from being morally neutral, is Himself righteous love, and demands the conscious acceptance of that purpose by individuals. This involves the suppression, or rather the subordination, of those instinctive forces which for the Fascist are the very essence of community.

At the bottom the Fascist believes in a dynamic but not a purposive interpretation of history and community. The Life-force and the instructive forces make their appearance now and always in whatever forms they will, and man can only accept them, *ought* only to accept them as they come, and must submit to them.

The final creed of the Fascist may be described as discontinuous dynamism, meaning thereby that the instinctive forces well up in community, but that there is no connecting thread of purpose between one stage or level of community and the next. At bottom, it is a fatalistic conception of community. All that we can be sure of is that the community will share in the nature of the libido. It will be a submissive herd, marked by self-assertion against other herds and obeying chiefly the laws of self-preservation and struggle. It is jungle law in community.

Behind this theory there lie too unquestioned, but as we believe, questionable assumptions. Both represent a pseudo-scientific attitude. On the one hand there is a too hasty acceptance of what are held to be the findings of the new psychology, and this in particular, that conscious choice plays an unimportant role in the framing of human decisions.

It is probably true of the vast majority of actions

which we perform that we are not conscious at the moment of performing them of making any definite decision. But that does not mean that conscious choice is unimportant. Many actions which now we do unconsciously are clearly habits which are the product of such conscious choice. Will must be exerted before a child can walk, although when once the habit has been formed it walks automatically and without consciousness. As these words are being written they come with no more than an instantaneous flash of attention, and they are no more than half-consciously chosen at most, but their semi-automatism is due to some years of steady, deliberate training in fitting words to ideas. Trace most of our so-called unconscious acts back, and sooner or later one comes on a consciously willed, deliberate choice. Not a little of our so-called 'unconscious' action is really unconscious in recollection only.

Some time ago the writer reviewed as far as possible the mental acts of the preceding three hours and found with regard to the majority of his acts that either (*a*) at the moment there was a swift instantaneous choice which involved no pondering, no lengthy weighing of alternatives, and which left little mark on the mind, or (*b*) behind the automatic or semi-automatic choice he made there was a previous conscious choice.

Consciousness enters into action far more often than at present it is fashionable to allow, and to it would seem to be relegated, even if not the general, at least the critical choices of life. Consciousness is the G.H.Q. of personality. Once decisions are made there, the resultant choices follow with a minimum disturbance of consciousness. The materials which man has to use may be provided by his unconscious, but it is his conscious mind which determines the form he gives to them and decides to what uses they shall be put.

The more consciousness enters into action the more

characteristically human do we become. The fact that men often do act from unconscious motives simply means that the sub-human element which we share in common with the beasts still has influence and exerts power over us. By so much as we rise above it and incorporate it into the life of the spirit, by so much more are we men. It is a wholly unproved and erroneous assumption that we are most truly human when we "let the libido rip". The history of the advance of the race has meant precisely the substitution of consciousness for instinct and reason for impulse. To revert to Libidinism is to put the clock backward; it is to regress to a stage of human development which man *qua* man has outgrown.

Equally fallacious is the second assumption—it is indeed no more than the first carried over into the sphere of community—that the bond of community is to be found in those same instinctive forces. The hypothesis is derived, in fact, from the work of recent psycho-anthropologists who aver that in primitive communities it is these unconscious forces which are the cement of society, and that that primitive basis is carried over into our modern communities. The assumption itself therefore makes an assumption, that what the anthropologists examine is a true community.

It is exactly this which Christianity denies. The moment that we begin to talk about 'true' community we imply a standard by which the trueness or otherwise can be judged, and as we have already seen, for the Christian the bond of community is to be found in ends deliberately and consciously pursued. From the Christian point of view, we have not yet, nor has there ever been, true community; and just as the dominance of the unconscious elements in the individual means that he is by so much less truly human, so the predominance of the unconscious forces in community means that it is so much the less a true community. "It doth not yet appear" what either the true

individual or the true community is, but we knew that it implies the control of the libido, both individual and social, and that it involves the activity of both reason and conscience.

Moreover, by its nature, such a community based on the libido would at bottom be unstable; the libido taken by itself is anarchic and chaotic. It may lead to suppression of the instinct of self-expression, so that the individual is lost in the community (herd instincts) or to self-assertion of the individual against the community (egoistic instincts). The only possible ways in which the community would be stabilized are either (*a*) by the exercise of reason by the citizens themselves, or (*b*) by the exercise of coercion by an external authority. Out of the mass of possible manifestations of the libido, one or a group of similar instincts would have to be selected as the one which was to shape the community, and this selection could only be made by the individual's exercise of his own reason, or by some one else, or by some other group of persons doing it for him.

Fascism chooses the latter course: in effect it fosters the herd instinct as the one which alone can create community. It creates for its Absolute an entirely arbitrary entity called the State, to exercise all its force and use every possible means to develop the herd instinct and submerge the individual in his community. The repressed ego instincts are to find their outlet in sharing in and furthering the well-being of the State, which is in truth, little more than, an organized collective egoism—the will to live and the will to power. What the State wills is right just because the State wills it, and, *per contra*, whatever the State taboos is wrong. There can be no pooled goodwill of individuals firstly because there are no true individuals, and secondly because goodwill implies reason.

On this theory, the possibility of democracy in any form,

Liberal, Socialist or Communist, goes by the board. The nation is reduced to the level of the ant-heap.

Freedom in its turn is unthinkable because, once more, it implies reason and real individuality. The State takes the place of God, claiming the right to control such embryonic and primitive conscience as is left to its citizens. Force and dictatorship are of its essence. They are not temporary accompaniments of a crisis, but part and parcel of its vital structure.

The State is the will to power as it faces inwardly to its own citizens and outwardly to other communities. To complete our metaphor, the Fascist State is not only an ant-heap, but it is an ant-heap in a jungle; nay, it is worse! The struggle and ravin are all the worse because by a vital self-contradiction, the struggle is directed and controlled by reason. The Fascist philosophy, once accepted by the world, would reduce it at once to ashes. From Fascism, if it is true to its own principles, and because it denies the ultimate validity of any morality save that which it itself enjoins, neither truth nor trust nor goodwill must be looked for, only a low cunning which adapts itself to the momentary aspects of the international situation to snatch out of it for itself what advantage it may. In international politics, it knows and can know no morality save that of the robber baron of the Middle Ages, the footpad and the thug: its only possible code of honourable action can be that of such honour as obtains among thieves.

History, science, art, literature, leisure, industry, politics, all are to be swept into the cogs of the machine. Everything is to be twisted and prostituted to the demands of the robot Frankenstein State.

Could anything be further from the Christian ideal? In its denial of the claim of individuality, in its exercise of force, in its denial of freedom, in its claim that the State is the arbiter of morals, in its attitude to other communities

in the world, Fascism is at the extreme pole from Christianity, and it is difficult to conceive of any wider gulf which could possibly separate them. In them is fairly joined the issue between the revolution of crude might and the revolution of love. Between the two there can be no compromise. They stand opposed, irreconcilable foes, and the battle is no mimic warfare but *à l'outrance*, to the death. There is not room in the world for both to exist together, and with it, a Christianity which knows its own principles and is true to them, can make no possible bargain, save in terms which spell immediate betrayal and ultimate disaster.

If the case stands thus as between Christianity and Fascism, what are the basic relations between Christianity and Communism? It will be seen at once from the comparative schedule at the beginning of this chapter, that there are certain close resemblances, and that therefore the position of sharp antagonism we indicated earlier is not unlikely to arise. Christianity and Communism will make their appeal largely to one constituency, and therefore the actual relations between them, as historic expressions, may be that of acute struggle.

In their conception of what the final purpose of community should be, the well-being of both man and community; in the main relationship which they believe should hold between the individual and community, that of goodwill and service; in their transnational character, in their equalitarianism, in their denial of ultimate authority as resident in the State alone, in their missionary zeal, both closely resemble one another. Their conceptions of history as slow development issuing in crisis, whilst not in fact identical, are also very similar.

The points at which Communism differs from Christianity are four in number:

(1) The conviction that personality is necessarily deter-

mined by economic factors, challenges the Christian conviction that it is untrue as history and ought not to be true in fact.

(2) The conviction that dialectical materialism is the ultimate principle of all life and social organization, conflicts with the Christian conviction that the ultimate source of life is God, Who is Spirit.

(3) The belief in the use of coercion in time of crisis is opposed to the Christian law of Love.

(4) Its substitution of class barriers for national means that it is Christian universalism but half carried through and worked out.

It would be seen at once that (3) and (4) are the moral expression of (1) and (2). If these are sound, then those are indubitable. The root antagonism of Christianity to Communism is not, as it was in the case of Fascism, mainly the morals which gave rise to the philosophy, but the philosophy which has occasioned the morality. It is the root intellectual assumptions, the fundamental interpretations of life which are in question. If dialectical materialism is true, then the use of physical violence to crush opposition is legitimate; if economic determinism is true, then class warfare is legitimate. The vital contention of Christianity is that neither of them is an adequate account of reality, and that therefore they are at bottom illusions, a misinterpretation of real, factual existence.

The denial does not extend to the facts themselves, but to the Communist reading of them and to the influences drawn from them. As rough and ready descriptions they may serve; it is only their claim to be considered ultimate explanations that is brought into court for judgment. To this we now turn.

We have first of all to lay an account with the objection which the Communist will at once urge, that he has no philosophy. He is indeed never tired of insisting that he

is above everything else a realist, and that his guide is science and science alone; his claim is that he is creating for the first time in history a scientific civilization. It is, he holds, founded on scientific discovery and shaped by scientific principles, and nothing characterizes the Communist more than his mistrust of ideologies, of philosophy. His working faith is "Philosophy has explained the world, the task is to change it", and no phrase could more adequately sum up the mood and temper of Communism. Away with all philosophy. Have done with theorizing; let us stick to the hard facts. As a Communist quoting the old tag once said to the writer, "Philosophy is like a blind man looking in a thick fog on a dark night for a black cat that ain't there".

Ideology—philosophy—to the Communist smacks of "defence mechanism". It compensates for failure to solve real problems in the sphere of concrete living, by solving abstract problems and finding solutions for them in the unreal world of ideas. It is man's chiefest dodge, subtle and alluring, for diverting his own attention, and, what is worse, that of other people from the challenges, puzzles, and problems of actual life. What we will not do in practice in the council chamber and the market-place we pretend to do in the study, and the pretence leaves us with the comfortable feeling that we have really achieved something. Philosophy is a moral anæsthetic which deadens the thrust of actual wrongs on conscience, mind and will; therefore, if real life and real problems are to be handled effectively, philosophy must go. To philosophize is to don blinkers with the object of hiding from oneself the raw, rough injustices of life.

It is indeed the fact that Christianity is the most effective ideology, the most potent in its effect upon the mind, and the most numbing in its effect upon the practical will—so the Communist believes—which makes religion in general

and Christianity in particular, anathema to the Communist. Religion is *the* enemy. It is a substitution mechanism. It offers shams as realities and shadows as substance. For real, political and economic liberty it offers an unreal "spiritual" liberty; for a world of righteousness and joy here and now it offers a non-existent world of perfect bliss after death. It cuts the nerve of the will to earthly righteousness and happiness by bidding men endure wrongs for the sake of an illusory heaven; it sabotages the Kingdom of Actual Righteousness by substituting for it a future, wholly shadowy, wholly unsubstantial, infinitely post-dated, other-worldly Kingdom of God. It is, therefore, the chief instrument of the capitalist and bourgeois classes for keeping the people quiet and as such it is The Enemy. Communism and Christianity, concern for a this-worldly society of righteousness, and belief in a spiritual world cannot exist together. So runs the Communist plea.

Now it has to be admitted that much of this indictment holds good of contemporary Christianity—less so perhaps in this country and in America than on the Continent. For now close on a hundred years there has been a strong and growing section of Christian opinion in this country which has been profoundly concerned, often in a radical way, with social righteousness, but it can hardly be said to be characteristic of Christian opinion even in this country as a whole. Religion is still regarded very largely as having to do exclusively with private morals, and the cry of "No politics in religion" would probably be endorsed by the overwhelming majority of adherents of the Churches. And such social enthusiasm as there is, is for the most part committed to the theory of "the inevitability of gradualness" and has of late shown a disturbing tendency to tinker with the present financial machinery rather than challenge the whole

fundamental structure and basis of the existing economic order.

And not infrequently the enjoyment of heaven has been held up—and still is held up—as compensating for the ills of life here and now. The chains will be snapped at death, therefore you can afford to disregard them.

On the Continent conditions have been much worse. The strictly “spiritual” pietism of Lutheranism, more recently the influence of the Barthian movement and the whole attitude of the Roman Catholic Church to Communism—much more implacable than it is to Fascism, with which it has made terms—all count in the same direction. They tend to fasten the attention of the Christian on artificially isolated “spiritual” values and withdraw it from matters of actual social righteousness. The former is the concern of religion, the latter that of the State; the one is the domain of Caesar, the other of God. So much we may admit; on the whole the influence of the Church has been to divert interest from the need of radical change; tacitly it has accepted the *status quo*.

In this country the Church has a not unworthy record of “social reform” which it has sometimes inspired, more often has supported and endorsed. Yet it may fairly be said that its concern has too often been with the superficial wrongs and not with their radical causes. It has fastened its attention—and that of the public—on the symptoms and not on the disease itself. And when it has been aware of the conflict between its own principles and those of, say, industry, it has too often concerned itself with vague words like “love”, “goodwill”, and “service”, without ever spelling them out into the concrete terms of social organization.

We have as yet no authoritative sketch of how industry must actually be run if it is to be run on Christian principles, and the same is true of the political organization of

the community, of education and the like. For secular education tinged with definite religious or sectarian teaching we have schemes in plenty, but not of an education which is Christian through and through and is mainly concerned with inculcating Christian values and creating individuals of truly Christian judgment. In struggling for control of the half hour's "religious" education the sects have lost sight of the necessity of making all the rest of school life religious. There is no more crying need to-day than for a truly Christian sociology, Christian not in the technical sense that it makes official room for religion, but in the sense that from first to last it is controlled by Christian principle and creative of Christian values and judgments.

The Communist, then, has solid ground for his conviction that Christianity detracts from social enthusiasm and diverts attention, interest and redemptive will from the real problems which have to be faced if a true community is to function in righteousness.

Yet however fully the change may be substantiated against Christianity as we know it to-day and as it is both expounded in the Churches and practised by Christians, it is clear that such a charge cannot hold against primitive Christianity and Christian principle as expressed in the teaching of Jesus.

It is not even true, as the Communist alleges, that all religion is a psychological escape from fear. That belongs to a late Victorian conception of the origins of religion which further research has outmoded. True, many religions do begin there, but that is not true of them all. In any case the main concern of primitive man with religion and religious practice is not so much emotional as practical—it is to *use* for severely practical ends the spiritual powers in which he believes. In any case origins do not determine essence. What religion was at the

beginning of its human story, or what it is first of all in the individual soul, no more determines what is in essence than an anthropoid ape can be described as a man. If that were true, then the science to which Communism trusts is discredited for the same reason. What a thing is in its essential self only appears as it develops: we discover what it truly is by looking not backwards to its beginning, but forward along the line of its actual development to its apparent goal.

And two things are certain, that however religion may have begun, in Christianity it is no longer a flight from life, and the individual soul does not become really Christian until it is most deeply committed to life in its fullness.

Christianity was cradled in storm and it derives from the life and words of one who was from first to last a realist. He began with the real things in the human heart and built on them as His foundation. His argument is "how much more", and He argues back from the best in human nature to its better still in God. He took the name expressive of what was at the same time the most real and the highest relation in which two people could stand one to another and applied it to God—"Our Father". He starts from realities and argues to realities fuller, completer still. And as we have seen, His message is frankly realistic and revolutionary. He never attempted to hide from Himself and His followers the raw, rough edges of life, and He frankly told them that whosoever followed Him must count the cost that the Christian adventure was of the nature of a forlorn hope, that He was like a king meeting with ten thousand an enemy that came against him with twenty thousand. Cut a section across the Gospels at any point and it is real life, sometimes bleeding and raw and rough and angry, which we see. If ever there was an "extravert" with his mind turned full on

reality it was Jesus. And it is that sense of realism running through all His life wherever we can test it which persuades us that He is no less realistic when He insists that love and not force is the basis of all true community and the achievement of it.

Further, as we have seen, Jesus demanded that His teaching should find embodiment in a real community, and that He refused to accept any idea of divorce between spirit and matter. Both in the point from which He started and in the goal towards which He looked and in the means He proposed to adopt, Jesus has His feet planted firmly and squarely in the solid earth. Here is no fearful being timidly turning his face from reality and hiding from it, but one who insists on keeping His eyes wide open to it and demanding of His followers that they should do the same. If a man came to Him for any reason or from any motive whatsoever, he could not be His disciple until he had put his own, until then dominant personality behind him and accepted the whole universe, God, and the reality of material opposition included, and found in that whole-hearted committal of himself to God and life, a newer, richer, truer personality than the one he had lost. A realist himself, He demanded equally complete realism in others. Anything less like the phantasy thinking of the man who is hag-ridden by fear, it is impossible to conceive.

However we Christians have caricatured it then, the original statement of Christian principle is not a "defence" mechanism; it is not the substitution of artificial problems for real ones, nor the provision of academic answers in place of their concrete solution. It keeps as close to the facts as does Communism itself—the one difference is that Communism claims to draw its ultimate principles mainly from science and from a science which until recently was more concerned with the sub-human

than the specifically human experience of life, whilst Christianity starts with and includes as its basis, the specifically human qualities and experiences.

Nor, in spite of the Communist's declaration that he lives and works by the light of science, can we allow his claim that he has no ideology, for quite clearly he has. When he asserts his faith in science, he is asserting that science alone gives a clear and complete account of reality, and of all reality at that. That belief belongs once more to a mid-Victorian confidence and assurance from which modern science has retreated. What modern science is sure of is that it does not and cannot deal with any given fact of reality in the full, that at most it can only deal with aspects of the given fact, and that it can only give clear knowledge the more completely the aspects of the fact are susceptible of being translated into mathematical formula.

Turner's picture, "The Fighting Téméraire" is conceivably capable of being translated into a strict enumeration and account of the speeds of the waves of light which strike our eyes from its glowing colours, but the light vibrations and mathematical formula are no more the picture than a chemical account of the constituents of an egg is the actual egg that we eat at breakfast. What modern science has come to recognize is that it deals with natural facts at what we may call an intermediate stage; to change the metaphor, it gives an account of the chemical changes in the plate or film which are transformed into and are responsible for the lights and shadows on the print, but it has no report on, and indeed is not concerned with the object, a house, a landscape, or what not, which is itself the origin of these chemical changes in the plate. Science deals with abstractions, with aspects and with relations; it can never gather into its net the actual wholeness of any given fact, and the further it moves

away from dead and inert matter and the more closely it is concerned first with life and then with consciousness and self-consciousness, the less assured and the more tentative are its findings.

But it is precisely the complete competence and trustworthiness of scientific method in these spheres which is most vital for the Communist's conviction, and when he assumes on the one hand that science gives a complete account of reality, he is in truth affirming an ideology, a philosophy.

Nor does the case stand any better with the Communist's faith that life can be guided and controlled by scientific method and scientific method alone, for quite clearly the most important things in life are not discoverable by any such means. No radioscope has yet discovered common sense and no anatomist's knife has laid love bare to view. The first is an assumption pure and simple, a practical reality which science can neither assure us of nor yet discredit. At two removes at most from any concrete reality we are in the presence of mystery where science cannot walk and where it is silent; we are in the presence of life, love, reason, beauty, and, the modern scientist would be inclined to say, matter itself. Of these there are no strictly scientific accounts, yet they are the most assured realities of all. When, therefore, the Communist assumes that either the whole of any given real fact, or the whole of reality is capable of scientific interpretation, he is making an assumption which is not warranted by the facts; he is, in a word, violently forcing his own interpretation on the facts and is committing the, to him, unpardonable sin of creating an ideology, a philosophy.

In point of fact the Communist is always being driven beyond science and all unconsciously calling in the aid of ideas and emotions, which in reality have little or no scientific foundation whatsoever. No word occurs more

frequently in specifically Communist documents and proclamations than the word "brotherhood", yet it would be difficult to find strictly scientific justification for either the word or for the idea. Nature has indeed its picture of symbiosis, of groups of animal and plant life living in co-operation with and dependence on each other, yet it has no less its picture of implacable struggle, of "dog eat dog". "Nature red in tooth and claw" is a grim reality, and, strictly speaking, when the Fascist speaks of struggle as the law of life, he is at least equally as scientific as the Communist. A rigidly impartial scrutiny of man reveals the fact that the instincts which make him see in every other man a potential enemy, or one who is to be used to satisfy a lust for power, are as real as the herd instinct which makes him recognize in every other man a brother whose good he must seek as well as his own. "No. 1 first" is written as deeply and as indelibly on the human heart as "each for all". If science be asked to pass its verdict, then Capitalism with its law of "every one for himself and the devil take the hindmost" is as valid as Communism!

So far as detached observation is concerned, the strictly scientific verdict on human nature is that of ambivalence—we all face two ways. With part of us we thrust out our hands to help our fellow-men; with those same hands we may equally well mercilessly thrust him down beneath our feet to trample on him without mercy.

The impossibility of adhering to a strictly scientific point of view appears even more clearly when we examine the basic idea of economic determinism in Communism. As a rough and ready broad generalization of what has happened historically it is certainly partly true, but no more than partly true. The slaves in British lands were freed a century ago, and it is hard to bring that event within the scheme of economic determinism. It was, of

course, discovered afterwards that the freeing of the slaves was economically wise, but the point to be noted is that the opposition to it was largely on the grounds of its economic unsoundness. It was at least as much a moral gesture as an economic compulsion. Without the driving power created by the moral passion of Wilberforce, it could hardly have been. Much the same comment might be made of the alignment of sympathies in this country during the American Civil War. The industrial North, especially Lancashire, against its own economic interests, was almost solid for the Northern States and the liberation of the slaves. It is not difficult to find illustration after illustration in which afterwards the path of moral righteousness has proved the way of economic wisdom, but in the achievement of which the dominant factor was the moral. Not to make too large a claim, it is clear that the assertion of complete economic determinism is an overstatement of the case, and that moral issues have on occasion diverted human activity into channels other than those indicated by simple economic prudence.

Even if one allows the claim to be broadly true, as a statement of historic fact, it does not necessarily follow that such economic determinism must always hold good. Our first comment would be that it is at least as true that man makes the system as that the system makes the man. Particularly illuminating in this regard is the early history of the Theory of Wages. Adam Smith, in his *Wealth of Nations* indicates that the advance of industry will automatically mean the advance of the artisan, and he assumed a fair division of the rewards of industry between land, labour and capital. In point of historic fact, however, profits rose and wages remained relatively unchanged. They remained at first about the subsistence level, and Ricardo, adopting as his basis, Malthus' theory of population, formulated the *Iron Law of Wages* according to

which wages never can rise much above the level needed to keep the worker an efficient industrial tool. It was this theory of wages which was incorporated by later economists into the body of the economic teaching of Adam Smith, though in truth it accords but ill with it. To-day, it is of course largely discredited, although probably if the average of wages over "fat" years and "lean" years, times of prosperity and times of slump were taken, it would be found that it is not so far from the truth; the important point is that economic theory was suited and adapted to economic practice, and that practice was, in fact, dictated by sheer greed. The economic laws were indeed determined by the economic practice, but the economic practice was the outcome and expression of a moral attitude.

The Communist assumes that man offers to his economic environment something like a *tabula rasa* or a blank sheet of paper and that the economic system writes on it what it will. But that is not so. Man never is wholly plastic in any situation, he makes an instinctive but not automatic response, and it is this instinctive response which shapes the economic structure. True, the response is often little more than half-conscious but it is all-important.

Consider, for example, the position of a thrifty Yorkshire woollen weaver in the early years of the nineteenth century. By his thrift and by his capacity he manages to save and borrow enough to enable him to start as employer. He discovers, to cut short a long process of analysis, what would seem to be obvious, that the less he pays his workpeople the higher mount his profits, and that, conversely, the more he pays them, the less he will have for himself. The instinct of greed, possibly also the instinct of power, come into play, and determine that in fact he pays his workpeople as little as they will take.

What happens, it would appear, is that any economic activity of any kind whatever offers first an opportunity

of wealth and also of power, and the extent to which these instincts are surrendered to determines the direction in which the economic activity shall be guided. To compete with him, other manufacturers will have to adopt the same tactics and so the individual action becomes generalized in a régime. The régime has its own characteristic morality and the average man simply accepts it without question. Yet if that were all, it is clear that the economic machine would largely remain stabilized at the same moral level. It does not, however, remain so stabilized, and partly through pressure on the part of organized labour from below, and partly through the action of liberally-minded employers an alteration in it takes place. In other words, the machine to begin with is partly the creation of an instinctive response which has about it a moral quality, and its changes of ethos are equally determined by moral ideals clearly held and consciously adopted.

The history of economic organization, moreover, manifests a clear tendency to eliminate control of industry by sheer instinct and to substitute for it deliberate and conscious control. The rise of the cartel and trust movement all over the world and crossing all national boundaries, is clear evidence that the modern industrialist no longer believes that industry either can or will run itself efficiently. Left to itself, it became too much like a Kilkenny Fair, and the successive phases of trusts, nationalization, etc., simply mean that man refuses any longer to be dominated by the economic machine. He is determined to change its shape to suit his own needs—or those of his class—and to bend it to his own desires. The machine no longer determines him, but he determines the working of the machine. The industrialist shapes it for his own ends; the Communist for his.

For that is the paradox which Communism presents; the very man who asserts that men are made by economic

forces is determined to shape his own economics. History has nowhere witnessed on such a colossal scale so resolute a determination to shape economics according to theory, in this case that of Lenin's interpretation of Marx, and the very effort means that Communism is eating its own words and going back on its own fundamental theory. Economic determinism, then, is not a strictly accurate account of the facts. There is always an element of deliberate choice present in the creation and in the development of any given industrial régime; as modern industry has developed it has shown itself to be increasingly susceptible of control by human reason, and such control has in fact taken place. Of this control, Communism is itself the most impressive illustration.

If anything was and is still needed to clinch the matter and finally make it certain that Communism does not really live by its faith in science, and is itself something more than a purely scientific organization of community, that it is in truth built up on dogma in as true and as thoroughgoing a sense as any religion, it will be found in an examination of the second plank in the Communist creed, that of dialectical materialism. It fits in but uneasily with its complementary dogma of economic determinism, and indeed, it may be said that if dialectical materialism is true, then economic determinism is untrue, save of the elementary stages of community, for on the theory of dialectical materialism there is inherent in matter itself an auto-evolutionary dynamic. Of itself and out of itself matter creates spirit, and is the *fons et origo* of all the spiritual faculties and activities of man. That clearly means that in history itself a new factor comes into play, and has to be reckoned with and increasingly determines the course of history and the shape of community. Just as in the evolution of individual man, we witness the slow replacement of control by instinct by conscious and deliberate

control, so, in the history of community, we are likely to witness a transition by spirit and conscious direction. That is, as we have seen, actually happening in our own day. We are passing out of the period in which economic determinism was partly true, and into an era when the economic order is wittingly being shaped and controlled. Dialectical materialism and economic determinism cannot both be true at one and the same time as generally valid principles of community.

Next we have to come to terms with the dogma itself. Is it true that matter itself has this latent potency for all forms of existence? Does science say, or even suggest, today that in matter is the promise and potency for all life, that mind is the product, rather a by-product, of matter? Doubtless there are scientists who held such a dogma, but be it noted, it is a dogma which they hold on non-scientific grounds. Their science itself provides no evidence for such a statement. Rather, what science provides us with is a final unity which has two aspects, matter and spirit. Just as the modern psychologist speaks of personality as a mind-body, neither aspect of which is resolvable in terms of the other, so the world with which the modern scientist presents us is a unity, spirit-matter, of which neither term is explicable in terms of the other. Spirit into matter is a sum that won't go. Indeed, it may be said that at the hands of the modern physicist, matter itself is taking on some of the qualities of spirit, and a great modern mathematical astronomer has given it as his judgment that the universe begins to wear the appearance of the thought of a great thinker. In all that, we believe, the great fallacy is that mathematical formulae, and mathematical relations are mistaken for the full reality of fact itself, but with that we are not at the moment concerned. All that we are concerned to point out is that scientific experiment affords no warrant whatever for believing that matter is the ultimate

and all-creative reality of life, and therefore no ground for the Communist belief that "Matter is Fate, and Fate is Matter". The attribution of an auto-evolutionary dynamic to matter, is in fact an illicit and arbitrary introduction of an idea that belongs to one sphere of life into another which it may have no application.

The idea of evolution belongs essentially to the organic sphere of existence. It was the product of the study of realities all of which possessed the common characteristic of life. To transfer that idea to the inorganic world is clearly invalid, and it is, as we have said, entirely an arbitrary act. One has just as much right to transfer the ideas of self-consciousness and conscience to the inorganic world, as the idea of evolution. "Dialectical materialism" therefore, is not a scientifically established truth; it is of the nature of a postulate, a dogma to be held and believed and acted on in its own light and worth.

Now dogma means that the human mind on its journey of thought comes on a barrier beyond which no further progress can or ought to be made. It finds itself confronted with the board: "No road for thought beyond this point"; it means that the mind finds itself in a temporary or permanent cul-de-sac and sits down and rests there. Beyond that point no inquiry is possible. Such a point is reached for the Communist in the conception of dialectical materialism. That is the ultimate term of thought and it is impossible to get beyond or behind it. Is that so?

It is at this point that the real divergence between Communism and Christianity makes itself felt; it is indeed the fundamental issue between them and is especially important, as we shall see, for the interpretation of the dialectical process of history. The Christian contention is that on that road indeed there can be no further progress, but that it is a wrong road, and wrong precisely because it begins with the wrong facts and omits the most important of

them. Christianity denies that any true and adequate interpretation of life can be gained from the examination of sub-human forms and categories of existence. It declares that if there is an evolutionary process at all, that process is most likely to manifest itself in the most fully developed forms of life, and not in its less or even least developed forms.

The essential nature of the evolutionary process, therefore, is to be discovered less by an examination of the structure of the atom than of the highest forms of human experience. These experiences find their most characteristic expression in man's deliberately adopted relation to Goodness, Truth and Beauty, and these relations in turn find their supreme expression in Jesus of Nazareth. The Christian declares that if you wish to see the Soul of Evolutionary process at work you must begin with Him, He is the "last of life, for which the first was made", and that most unmistakably in His Cross. The soul of the universe finds its supreme self-expression on Calvary. If we must start from the modern scientific assumption of spirit-matter, the Christian asserts that the creative element in it is spirit and not matter, and claims that this alone makes the Universe, and the process it embodies intelligible. He asserts in a word, the creative power of God, Who is Spirit.

It is precisely these human realities of experience, and exactly this reality of Jesus which the Communist leaves out. Yet surely it is these realities which we know with a fullness, completeness and vividness denied us in the simply aspectual knowledge of science. And surely if ever there was a fact which cried out to be taken note of it is the fact of Jesus. That an unknown man in the space of three years at the most, probably within the space of fifteen months, should change the face and direction of history and to multitudes of individuals should open up new ranges of moral

possibility, is surely a fact on at least an equal plane of reality with stars and stones, and every-day flora and fauna.

The Christian would even go further. He would boldly make the appeal to broad findings of modern science itself. He would claim that the presence of organization, of law and order in the Universe itself, is a witness to the reality of a creative mind at work within it. Some years ago in West Yorkshire there was a landslide after which rocks and stones lay about in the valley in a welter of disordered confusion. Passing that way a little later, the writer saw that men were already at work, building out of the disordered and scattered stones a new wall and a stone shelter for cattle. The imposition of order and a plan on the heap of rubbish was the work of mind and conscious purpose, and the order could not have been obtained in any other way. By analogy, the Christian would suggest that the order of the Universe can only be the product of a Supreme Mind.

The position then is this: the Communist avers that you cannot get behind matter, and that you must force into the idea of matter by an illogical process all that you find true of later and higher forms of existence—you must, to put the matter shortly, interpret the end by the beginning. The Christian avows that exactly the reverse is true, that you only get a true insight into the meaning of the evolutionary process—which he maintains equally with the Communist—by interpreting the beginning in the light of the end. So he sees the evolutionary process as successive acts of God's Self-impartation of Himself to the Universe, and of that Self-communication He sees the supreme expression in the personality and the Cross of Jesus of Nazareth. So the Christian claims that he does get behind matter to God, and that when he avows his belief in God he keeps nearer to the facts—to all the facts—and interprets them more rationally than does the Communist. The living

ultimate power in the Universe is the Creative Spirit of God.

That conception becomes important when we turn to the Communist account of the dialectical process in economic development. Again, we may agree that as a rough and ready account of what has happened it may be accepted as true. There has, in fact, been such a process as the Communist describes. Economic life is so ordered that both now and in the past it has always created the very conditions which have ultimately destroyed it. Strictly speaking, if dialectical materialism were the final account of the matter, it would mean something like a cyclical theory of economic history and closely resembling Spengler's cyclic theory of civilization, and there would be no ground for believing that the Communist organization of economic life would, or could, escape the fate of all the other forms which have preceded it. It would itself provide the materials and create the instruments of its own destruction.

Christianity claims, however, that dialectical materialism is not the true or the complete explanation of the matter. Rather, it sees at work in economic history what we may call dialectical moralism. It believes that God has set in the material world itself fundamental moral laws which cannot be broken, and that if men try to build on any other principles or according to any other laws, the inherent laws both of matter and community will destroy all such created organizations. Dissolution and decay have overtaken every economic—and political—order in civilization up to the present, because men have tried to establish their economic and political life on a basis other than that which God has set in the nature of things and of society. Men have broken the fundamental laws of life; often it has seemed for a space of time with impunity—but in the end, those laws of life which God ordained from the very begin-

ning, have caught them up and broken them. "The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly small."

In the long run, so the Christian believes, God's writ runs through all life, and we disobey it at our peril. That process which means that the stars in their courses ensure the destruction of all forms of communal life that are not established in accordance with the Will of God, we call dialectic moralism, and if it be true that a right interpretation of life drives us back to belief in God, it would appear to be a more adequate and ultimate explanation of economic history than dialectical materialism.

It is this difference of ultimate dogma—God for the Christian, Matter for the Communist—which lies at the root of their difference of judgment in practical matters of policy. For the Christian, the use of violent coercion to constrain others to conform to the Communist scheme, and the still more violent and all-pervasive coercion of the spirit exercised upon the individual through education, etc., are in themselves sources of weakness, an attempt to defy the ultimate moral laws of the Universe. It may be that if the Communist brings forth the fruits of righteousness even yet his sin will be forgiven, but in and by itself the use of violence is a "kicking against the pricks", the breaking of human waves of passion against the granite cliffs of the moral order of the Universe.

What then from the Christian point of view, we find, is that Communism, so far from being scientific, is at bottom dogmatic. In the final analysis, it rests on assumptions which are pseudo-scientific at the best, and rest on still deeper assumptions which are arbitrary and not warranted by a larger view of or a deeper insight into life as a whole. Nor has its ideal of Brotherhood any foundation in a strict scientific examination of human personality. It is an idea imported from without, and in point of fact it is an importation from the Christian conception of both the individual

and the community. Literally, in this case, "God maketh even the wrath of man to praise him".

What then are the probable relations between Communism and Christianity?

As we have seen, the Christian community as Jesus conceived it bears a close resemblance to the Communist ideal of community. Both alike believe in a community created by direct personal relationship, in a community of practical brotherhood, in a community concerned for human and personal welfare, in a self-determined community in which there is no arbitrary authority. Where they differ is in their fundamental assumptions. When Communism sees Matter, Christianity sees the creative spirit of God; where Communism sees dialectical materialism, Christianity sees dialectical moralism; where Communism sees man at work in his own strength, Christianity sees the need of man being purged and redeemed by his communion with God. From this follows the difference in their methods. The Communist trusts to violence to establish brotherhood, the Christian is sure that lasting brotherhood can only be established by love. What is certain, therefore, is that the programme of violence offers a short cut which will prove attractive to many who share a belief in the same ideals to which both Communism and Christianity are, or ought to be, committed, but that that short cut is forbidden to the Christian.

CHAPTER VI

DYNAMITE AND CURL-PAPERS

IN reply to all that we have urged in the previous chapter, the Communist might well say that it is after all only book-work and academic argument. With perfect justice, he might retort upon us the deadly and devastating test to which Jesus Himself appealed. "By their fruits ye shall know them." He might with perfect propriety and justice demand that we turn on our own civilization the search-light we have turned on Himself.

"You assert," He might well argue, "that according to the principle of the Founder of your religion, a Christian community is based on goodwill and brotherhood, that it implies equality, that it is self-directed and controlled, and that it is concerned supremely with specifically human welfare above everything else. You have been at work in the world for 1900 years. The civilization of the West grew up and took shape when you Christians were a dominant power in every land. Have you in fact created such a civilization, and if not, why not?"

Our criticism of both Fascism and Communism is in fact a boomerang, recoiling first of all on the head of so-called Christian civilization, and secondly, on the head of the Christian Church itself. We cannot avoid attempting to form some kind of Christian judgment on Western civilization and on the Church's own success in and loyalty to its task. Has it point of fact, created a civilization in which brotherhood, equality, self-determination and concern for men are the dominant characteristics? With that question in mind we must examine Western Christendom.

It is plain first of all that Christianity has made a considerable impact on civilization, and it is not too much to say that most of what is best in civilization is due either directly or indirectly to Christian influence, even though that influence has been mediated not infrequently by those who disagreed violently with some or all of the specific Christian dogmas. Through its persistent performance of the 'ambulance' work of the world, it has made the ideas of mercy and sympathy current coin of morality, it has been largely instrumental in giving to womanhood a new status. The family and the child owe much to it.

So much has it engrafted these ideas on the mind of the body-politic, that the State itself has taken over as part of its normal work whole areas of life in which specifically Christian ideas find expression. In the 'social services' of the modern State, in its universal educational system, what was once the Church's charity has now become the ordinary normal activity of the State. More, it has always consistently held up the ideal of the brotherhood of man, even when its own practice has fallen below its own ideal, and its official gospel in international affairs has always included a blessing on peace. So much is indubitably true. That life is as rich as it is to-day is largely due to the influence of the Christian spirit. It has put mercy, sympathy and brotherhood on the map.

And negatively it has set bounds to their opposites. To harshness, to callous disregard of human welfare, it has appointed limits beyond which it is impossible to pass without the public conscience being aroused against the offender. It has definitely created a standard of public decency and mutual regard.

Yet two things have to be said—it has grafted these things on to a community life whose fundamental working assumptions were wholly other, and so has produced morally hybrid communities, and it has rarely shown that

imaginative sympathy which could detect customary and accepted violation of its own canons of conduct. In far too many cases it has only been when that violation was dramatic and arresting that Christianity has awakened to realize the evil thing that was taking place. To the day by day evil inherent in the organization of community life itself it has often been singularly blind and insensitive.

The result is that the Church's work has often been remedial of symptoms rather than curative of the radical trouble. It has worked at the circumference rather than at the centre.

Hence, the patchwork morality of our modern communities, and the appearance of the main effect of the work of Christianity as restraining the effects of cardinal social sins rather than coming to grips with those cardinal sins themselves. Thus, in the political organization of communities into States, we get the idea of international understanding and goodwill—expressed in the League of Nations—grafted on to a root conception of self-sufficient, autonomous, competitive nationalism, whilst in economic organization we have constantly increasing attempts by government to control industry in the interest of the whole community—or at least, efforts to ensure that the community is not injured by it—grafted on to an economic régime whose very heart is self-regard.

It is this very moral ambiguity of modern communities, joined with the fact that in recent years considerable advances have been registered in both political and economic community which may easily give rise to a false equanimity amongst Christians and blind them to what is in truth a fundamental antagonism between the Christian convictions concerning the basis and aims of a true community, and the fundamental axioms of modern community. For in truth, whether we examine either the political or the economic organization of community, it is impos-

sible to proceed far without realizing how alien they are from the fundamental Christian demands.

Political community's chief sin is perhaps in its permissive actions. It permits the economic organization of community to throw on to the industrial scrapheap two millions of men and to condemn both them and their families to a bare subsistence in which any development of personality is, humanly speaking, impossible, and which makes them unable to discharge what is at once a primary right and a primary duty, to wit, to contribute, by means of their economic activity to the well-being of the whole community. It has only made a beginning with the housing problem, and multitudes of its citizens still have to be born, to live, and to die in circumstances which make ordinary decency difficult, and real culture, not to speak of a higher morality, next to unattainable.

What modern community does with citizens, and to what extent it disregards the interests of a whole class, and degrades personality, was forcibly driven home on the writer in a recent experience. Passing by an East-end school during the play recess, he watched the children at play. Their clothes were comparatively poor, but what struck him was the alertness of their faces and their abounding energy. A few days later he was called on to be present at a Saturday Concert in the same neighbourhood. The audience varied in age from young people of thirty upwards, and what struck him about it was its dull hopelessness and resigned despair. It was impossible not to feel the human tragedy. These were men and women out of whom all joy was crushed and on whom on even at thirty care had chiselled its indelible marks. It was as though some invisible giant had taken them and pressed out of them everything save bare life itself. Yet once these were the children as bright as those whom the writer had seen a few days before. The damning indictment against politi-

cal community is not so much what it commits as what it permits.

The nineteenth century was *not* the age of individualism as it is often alleged to have been. Judged by its broad effects it was precisely the opposite; it was anti-individualistic. It allowed complete freedom to one type of individual—the aggressive and the greedy—to exploit for his own purposes, to use or discard as it ‘paid’ him, all who happened to be less aggressive or less greedy. The charge against political community is that it is an accessory after the fact. It has given its consent to human degradation.

Two other charges lie at the door of political community. In the vital matters of equipment for life, and of the provision of real justice, it definitely handicaps the poorer classes. It demands that before the child of the poor man shall be able to take advantage of the higher stages of education, whether secondary or university, he shall show a higher standard of ability than is needed by the children of the wealthier classes to obtain the same advantages.

Equally grave is the practical inequality of the classes before the law. True, if one takes the legal system and methods by themselves the law is the same for the poor as for the rich, and if a man can get before the law, he can be perfectly sure of a fair trial in his case. But it is just the problem of getting before the law which constitutes the difficulty. The higher courts of law demand a long purse and a deep one, and the costs of legal action in those courts are prohibitive to any save the well-to-do. The result is, not that justice is bought and sold, but that in many cases it is simply not available unless one can pay for the presentation of the case for justice. The net effect of this is that in effect there are some laws for both rich and poor, and some for the rich only. Political com-

munity therefore cannot be said to care for the individual *qua* individual, nor can it be said to provide true equality and justice.

When one turns from the internal organization of political communities to their external relations with other political communities organized like themselves as States, it is clear that whilst there is a nascent sense of the danger of competitive nationalism, especially having in mind the menace of modern warfare, and whilst there is growing up a conviction that the solution of our international problems is possible only on the basis of goodwill, yet the State is a Mr. Facing-both-ways. It does not let its left hand know what its right hand doeth. It wants co-operation, yet it is co-operation with a threat behind it, and in the final analysis the reality of mounting armaments points to the fact that the basic trust of the modern State is still in force, and if need be, of violence. It still regards itself as sovereign, and, if it is strong enough, as being the final judge of the rightness or wrongness of its own case. What the modern State presents us with then, is a community based ultimately on force, and giving preferential treatment to one class of citizens as over against another, and over whole areas of its life there is neither real equality nor real regard for personality. *It is essentially a community based on preference given to power.*

When one turns from the political organization of community in the State to its own economic organization in industry, the matter stands in an even clearer light, and if it is true to say that political community at bottom is based on sub-Christian principles, the statement is even more true of industry.

At only one point has it any affinity with fundamental Christian convictions. The head and front of the Christian charge against industry is that it is impersonal in its values, and therefore degrades human values and treats

human individuality as secondary, that it is autocratic and therefore prevents the co-operation of all for the good of all, and that it puts a premium on precisely those qualities which Christianity insists needs taming and controlling.

The first point becomes clear if we remember that the aim of industry is the impersonal thing called profit, which means money, which in turn means power. Ours is essentially a power community, exercising dominion by money. A business is maintained only so long as it can show a profit; when the profit fails the business shuts down unless there is reasonable hope that the temporary loss will be replaced by profit in the near future, or unless the business is essential to other business which show a profit large enough to counterbalance the loss sustained by the particular business under consideration. In the latter case, to isolate the particular business from its collateral organizations is an artificial procedure.

If there still remains any doubt in our minds, let us ask ourselves the next time we see an unemployment queue what its real significance is. One thing is clear—the community as a whole needs the work these men could perform and the goods they could produce. The need is there, and the men would ask, and do ask, nothing more than to meet it. Why then is the need not met? Why can't ragged children be clothed and shod? and why can't the men who wish to make the cloth and the boots do so? Is not the answer clear? The financial system may, and probably has, something to do with the situation, but is not the fundamental answer this: *that men are unemployed because it does not pay a certain group or class so to do?* And is that not tantamount to saying that the impersonal reality of profit is the dominant concern of industry and that human values take a secondary place at best? It is interested in the needs of man only in so far as those needs are a source of profit, nor, within limits,

does it greatly care what happens to the individuals in its employment. Competition for private profit tends to cheapen price and cheaper prices demand lower working costs. Only three ways seem open to the average employer. Either he must combine with other employers to establish a virtual monopoly in the particular goods manufactured, in which case the consumer is at the mercy of the cartel, or, if he remains a single employer, or group of employers, the lower working costs can be effected by taking it out of the quality of the goods produced or out of the wages of the employed.

He may indeed for a time maintain his costs by better organization, but as his methods and organization are copied by other employers, the competitive tendency to cut prices and therefore reduce working costs makes itself felt once more. In such case, if the profit be taken out of the goods by substituting inferior material, the workman is spiritually degraded by being asked to produce inferior goods; if the profit is taken out of wages he is materially injured by having his real standard of life depressed. In either case the man himself suffers; he is only a tool, a means, an instrument to an impersonal end other than himself—profit.

Next, industry as we know it is autocratic, and therefore prevents the co-operation of all for the good of all. Its organization is divided into those who give orders and those who obey them. The point to be noted is that the right to give orders is based on arbitrary economic power, the duty of obeying them on economic weakness. Nor, in this connection, must too much weight be given to the influence of the Trade Unions. In times of slump and crisis, when men are being discharged and the constant fear of unemployment lies heavy on those who remain employed, they are almost helpless. The workers' fear of being thrown on the industrial scrapheap, puts into

the hands of the employers a real scourge of discipline. Men submit to conditions which in normal times they would fiercely resent. At the present time, for example, there is a real scandal of overtime. Depleted staffs are being worked overtime, and they so work because over their heads is the sword of Damocles—the fear of unemployment. When industry is on the down grade the hands of the Trade Unions are almost completely tied. In any case, the Trade Unions can only step in to safeguard conditions of employment *when the factory or mine is already working*; until then they have neither standing nor function. The question as to whether the establishment should run at all, or for how long, is a question vested for decision in the management alone, and the sole question to be considered in this respect is the profitability or otherwise in the long run of the particular commercial orders under consideration. If the management considers it to be in its own interests to accept the orders the establishment is set going; if the management decides that the orders are not acceptable, the establishment ceases work or does less. Neither the interest of the workpeople nor the communal need to be met enters at all largely into the discussion. It is an autocratic decision, autocratically arrived at.

The psychological atmosphere created amongst the workers by such an organization of industry is clear. It breeds apathy, and in many cases direct hostility and a sullen temper which works with the management only so long as the worker is compelled to. Held to ransom by fear of unemployment in normal times, workpeople are excusably prone to hold the management to ransom whenever, as in a time of growing trade and rising prices, the opportunity occurs. Hence in industry itself arises a tension between the two executive elements in industry. At bottom each believes that it has a common interest

with the other only to a limited extent. It is to their common interest that the industrial establishment should be kept running, but each is determined to have a "fair share" of the swag, i.e. the economic profit.

It is around the definition of what is to be understood by "fair share" that the battle rages most fiercely. Management is convinced of its moral right to the whole of it; labour is equally convinced that its own moral right to it is unimpeachable. It is this impersonal end of industry, functioning through autocratic control, which makes real goodwill impossible.

And, finally, the principle of competition for private profit characteristic of industry puts a premium on those very qualities whose suppression, or rather transformation, is the radical demand of Jesus. It demands self-assertion against all competitors, and calls for egoism in the sphere of industry, and for the most complete self-regard—often indeed it puts a premium on ruthlessness, and such self-regard and self-assertion tend to become general. Just as in monetary theory we have a Gresham's Law, according to which, if there be a bad currency it will tend to drive out the good, so in the moral aspect of economic practice, the more complete an individual's self-assertion and self-regard, the more it will tend to drive out of industry those who believe in the opposite qualities. The payment of lower wages, the imposition of longer hours, etc., will mean that all other competitors in the same branch of industry will tend to be driven to do likewise. The economic machine is normally at the mercy of the meanest, most greedy and most self-assertive elements in it.

Be it noted that this tendency to exalt the most self-regarding instincts is not put forward as a criticism of competition as such. The competitive spirit will always have a place in any living, human adventure. What the Christian asks for is competition on behalf of the public

good; it is emulation in service which is the specifically Christian form of true competition. And if that be dismissed as a dream and illusion, the answer is that just such emulation has already taken place and takes place with fair regularity in Russia. No one can read the account of the digging of the Ship Canal from Leningrad to the White Sea without being struck by the way in which, what "realists" say is impossible, was actually done. Men worked overtime not by compulsion, but voluntarily in order that their share of the work of digging the canal might be larger than that of a competitive gang.

Secondly, if it be true that we must not expect emulation in service under present economic conditions, then the statement is the clearest testimony we could have concerning the fundamentally un-Christian nature of those conditions themselves. The poison lives not in the competitive element of economic activity, but in the fact that it is controlled and directed by self-regard; in a word, it is competition for private or group profit which is the toxic element and which works inevitably for moral degradation.

And perhaps the saddest element of the situation is that Christian men who, in their private lives are models of Christian living, feel themselves compelled to subdue themselves to the milieu in which they work.

There we touch, perhaps, the deepest source of the modern world's spiritual impotence—its divided soul. Man cannot to-day be the same person all the time. He cannot express in his industry, etc., the characteristics which he expresses in his life at home. He is one man before and after office hours; in between, the fierce, self-regarding competition of the modern world compels him to look after No. 1 at all costs. It is this moral and spiritual cleavage, it is the fact that a man cannot be one per-

sonality altogether and all the time, which is the root-cause of the spiritual ineffectiveness of many modern Christians. They cannot be in business as good as they are in their private lives, nor will they be as "bad"—as self-assertive—in their private lives as they are compelled to be in business. Torn between the two, religion becomes tainted with unreality; perhaps even with hypocrisy, and a certain fine, native honesty prevents men from openly supporting what they know they deny for the greater part of their working life.

Alternatively, they rationalize the situation and split life up into two compartments—the spiritual and the material—and they become stalwart upholders of a spiritual religion whose writ hardly runs outside the front door of the home or the church, or has any concern with material realities. Of such a religion they become enthusiastic advocates and propagandists. All attempt to amend the material conditions of life is given up as hopeless, nay more, any such attempt on the part of Christian thinkers and preachers is held up as degrading religion, and all such concerns are dismissed as secular. None the less, that defence of departmentalized religion against full religion is a lie in the soul; to-day it is *the* lie on the soul. Not a little evangelical zeal has exactly the same roots as religious indifference, and of the two the latter attitude may be the nobler. At all events it is wide awake to the moral realities of the situation, whilst wittingly or unwittingly the former has put a blind eye to the telescope and fails to discern them.

We do not desire to overstate the case. There is a true evangelical zeal which has its roots in a real morally recreative experience of God, and there is a religious indifference whose root is simply a disregard for anything that makes great demands on a man, but in a far larger number of cases than most professedly religious people

realize, evangelical zeal is a defence mechanism against criticism of our practical, working morality, and religious indifference springs out of the felt impossibility of squaring Sunday religion with workaday practice. Real Christianity would suffer a moral disaster of the first magnitude if an "evangelical" revival of the kind we have been describing should by any chance take place. It would mean the real surrender of religion to secularism, it would be an admission that the material conditions of existence are unredeemable.

In the description we have given of industry and its basic principles we are not, of course, assuming that these conditions are tamely submitted to by all who engage in industry. Nothing is more characteristic of our own age than the many efforts which individuals are making to transform industry into real service. And behind the conscious effort to raise the morale of industry lies a much larger volume of uneasiness. All we are concerned with here is to say that the basic principles which control and direct economic activity are such as we have described them, and the severest charge that can be brought against industrial ethics is precisely that they limit to a comparatively small scope such remedial measures as the best men in industry would desire to see adopted. Autocratic, an obstacle to goodwill, demanding the exercise of those very human qualities on which Jesus set His ban and putting human welfare in a secondary place at best, it is the denier of the basic principles of true and Christian community.

A strictly impartial visitor from another civilization might then well ask, "How has all this come to pass in the realm of politics and industry when, for more than a thousand years, Western Christendom has professed allegiance to Christianity?" Whence comes all this wide divergence, contradiction even, between the fundamental

assumptions of religion and the working assumptions of practical life.

It is here that we have to test Christianity as we know it by the principles which its Founder himself laid down. For the answer we give to our hypothetical critic's question is that the Christian Fellowship has lost sight of what we saw was Christ's own conception of it, to wit, that it should be a true community, itself organized on a Christian basis, and so should be *the* true community creating the conditions to which God could give His Kingdom. It is largely because the Christian Fellowship has forgotten that primary function and *raison d'être* of its own existence has accepted political and economic community based on force and self-regard as the stable and normal forms of community, and has therefore tried to fit itself into them, that it has largely been merged in them, has compromised with them, and has been so little aware of the great gulf fixed between Christian and secular principles of community. It has indeed always been aware of the difference, but the sense of conflict has only become acute in glaring cases of oppression and hardship, or when the claim of the secular community, most frequently the State, has impinged upon and threatened what the Church believed to be its own prerogatives and prestige.

Yet it is such a sharply defined conception of its own function which meets us in the pages of the New Testament outside of the Gospels. The burden of the Epistle to the Romans is that the Christian Church is the new Israel of God, and that clear self-consciousness of its existence as the true community destined to usher in the Kingdom of God runs through all the Epistles. That is the background which comes explicitly to the foreground in Romans, but it is assumed in them all, and when the actual injunctions of St. Paul in the matter of individual

conduct are examined it is clear that they are almost wholly directed towards fitting the individual for life in a community. It is only a criticism which forgets that background which mistakes St. Paul's teaching for individualism.

And here and there we get hints that the early Church did so think of itself. The practice of a primitive, Communistic sharing of goods and possessions in the Church of Jerusalem, and St. Paul's denial to Christians of the right to go to law before a heathen tribunal, point clearly to the fact that the early Church was more than a loosely knit fellowship, that it had its own distinct bonds of common life, that it possessed its own standards of judgment, and that it was sharply conscious of the radical difference between the principles of its own life and those of the community around it.

And if, as a considerable number of modern critics suggest, Matthew xviii. 15-19 is a reading back into the teaching of Jesus of the custom of the primitive Church we get another pointer in the same direction.

That same conviction maintains itself, albeit with steadily weakening force, during the first three centuries. The Church is the "People of God", "The New Race", the "New Generation", acutely aware that it is not as other communities are.

It was not until Constantine made Christianity the State religion that that strong sense of sharp contrast between the Christian community and the secular disappeared. It had indeed, as we have said, been weakening for some time before that. The early Christians were mostly poor people—though as the letter to Philemon shows, there were at least some wealthy adherents in it—and the ties which bound them to the secular community were relatively slender, but as the new faith began to become respectable amongst the wealthier and more cul-

tured classes it began to operate in a stratum where the ties which bound the convert to the secular community were both many and strong. Christianity was thus drawn into the world and the clear-cut edges of its difference from secular community began to be blurred.

The culminating point of that process came, as we have said, with Constantine's official adherence to Christianity and with his proclamation of it as the official religion of the State. With that act the whole relationship of the Christian Fellowship to the political community was changed. It was not merely that hordes of court camp-followers with a minimum of Christian conviction, experience and intention, pressed into the Church, and so the Church was leavened with a minimal Christian morality; it was something far more vital which happened, and it developed out of the necessities of the case.

Two communities claiming to deal with the whole of life could not exist side by side and either one must be absorbed in the other, or else they must accommodate themselves one to another on the basis of difference of functions. One community would be concerned for one aspect of human life and relationships, the other for the remaining aspects and relationships of life.

That was in part the solution which was tacitly arrived at. Henceforth the State would concern itself with the material aspects of life, the Church with the spiritual. Within broad limits the State would look after the temporal concerns of men, the Church after their eternal welfare. Law and justice, economics and trade, would be controlled by secular law and secular morality, leaving for the Church the control of the sphere of man's relations with God.

Henceforth, the human personality was to be split up and neatly divided; with part of him he served God, with part of him the State. Religion was to be one thing,

politics and trade entirely different from and disconnected with it. Spirit was insulated from body and body from spirit. In the future the State would have a care for man's lot in this world, the Church for his eternal destiny in the next. So was accomplished what, if it had not been inevitable in the circumstances, might well be called the Great Apostasy.

The tacit "concordat", which was in fact arrived at, would, however, have been guarded from its chief dangers had it not been for two other factors in the situation. The first was that the Church came to accept the expression of its relationship with the State in purely political terms. The true religious relationship, whether of one man to another, or of one community to another, is that of a redemptiveness which is involved in the very idea of love.

The Church, however, accepted a political description of that relationship. There were two empires, two communities, two swords, and the relationship between them was defined in the political categories of equality, superiority and inferiority. With whom did final authority lie? became a question of primary importance.

The result was that even after the idea of division of function had grown up and taken root, the discussion as to whether the spiritual or the secular imperium had supreme authority over the other vested in it almost inevitably focussed the thought of the Church on itself as the wielder of power, and as such, concern for its own well-being tended to usurp interest in the main mission and function of the Church. To preserve and to extend the influence of the Church *qua* Church became a first duty.

The Church was like a doctor who catches a disease from his patient. Because the question of the relationship between the two was dictated by the setting of it in political categories, the Church caught the conception of

sovereignty and authority from its ally-opponent. It became a spiritual counterpart of the secular Roman Empire, claiming allegiance, loyalty and service for its own sake, and increasingly concerned to claim a prestige similar to that enjoyed by the State.

The second factor which turned the "concordat" into little less than a disaster, was the schism which from almost the earliest times had been effected in its own Gospel. As we have already shown in an earlier chapter, for Jesus the two enemies of religion were sin and fear. When the Gospel was carried into the world of Graeco-Roman culture, its immediate point of contact with the need of the world was at the point of sin. If the statements of St. Paul in his letters to both the Romans and the Corinthians, or the conditions portrayed by the satirists Juvenal and Plautus, bear any resemblance to the actual moral predicament of the Mediterranean world—and perhaps we must allow for some heightening of the colours in the latter—as in all probability they do, it was indeed in a desperate plight. Paul could hardly have risked writing to the Corinthians "Fornicators, idolators, adulterers, sodomites, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners . . . and such were some of you" if the account of what they had been were not true in substance and in fact. It was at the point of crying and urgent moral need that the Gospel made one of its chief contracts with Mediterranean civilization. From more than anything else men need deliverance from the power of sin.

It was small wonder then that the theology of St. Paul—we should do well to remember that all the Epistles are written to men at the post-conversion stage of the religious life, and that the sense of sin was probably the result of St. Paul's preaching and not the target at which it was initially deliberately aimed—should be almost entirely a theology turning on the conception of sin. That

was where the shoe pinched the hardest, and it is in relation to sin that he sees the Incarnation, the Life and Work, the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus. And later generations, turning to the Epistles as the chief sources of a classic 'revealed' theology, retained his emphasis and saw the problem of the Christian interpretation not only of the life and death of Jesus but also of the purpose of God in history in substantially the same setting.

The sense that fear is a deadly obstacle to true community dropped completely out. The Gospel was divided, and one element in it on which Jesus laid particular stress was lost almost completely from view, and with the disappearance of any sense that the Gospel was related to fear as well as sin, the Christian message suffered irreparable loss.

The passing of the idea of relevance of the Gospel to fear meant the loss of the one thing which could have kept the Church fully concrete in its attitude to the problems of community life, and might have saved it from the false spirituality to which it has ever since been prone, and it would have gone a long way to counteracting the harm done by the alliance of the Church and State. The reason for that is not far to seek. It is always possible to refer breaches of a moral code back to the weakness of the individual and to interpret a man's concrete sins as being due to the presence of Sin within him. Not so with fear, for fear has always an external reference. It points directly to life and to life's pressure on men and its threat to them, and to that pressure as exercised in two ways.

On the one hand there is the pressure of what we may call the cosmic experience of life, the sorrow, defeat and disappointment which come to every man at some point in his mortal existence, and the adventure into the unknown with which life ends, death. On the other hand,

fear arises from the situation of the individual in his community. The organization of society may be such that he is never more than a single step from poverty and hunger; or his position within the organization may be so precarious and insecure that he never knows what tomorrow may bring forth; or it may be of such a nature that it keeps his personality in chains. From any of these causes fear may be born. Had the sense of man's need of deliverance from fear maintained itself in the Christian message, the Church would almost inevitably have been forced to examine the social origins of it.

Its contacts with actual life as a whole, would therefore have been much closer and more numerous; in especial, it would have realized much more fully than it has done, the inseparable connection of fear with community, and in that way it would have been delivered from the unreal "spiritual" individualism which has so frequently characterized its teaching and its appeal. Moreover, that same recognition of the place which fear occupies as a bar to happy and fruitful religious faith would have facilitated the dealing of religion with what it took to be its own special problem of sin. When the Christian is asked why moral progress in community is so slow, he usually points for an answer to the obduracy of sin in the human heart. May it not be that sin has proved so obdurate precisely because the Church has failed to realize the enormous part which fear plays in giving rise to sin? We are not alleging that all sin is due to fear, but it is clear that much of it is. Quite recently the writer had to do with what is a relatively common case. A woman, the wife of an unemployed under-manager, was accused of stealing bread from a baker's cart and in excuse pleaded that neither she nor her children had had any food for twelve hours, and that there was no prospect of further food for two days. The motive for the theft is clear. It was not

merely the woman's love for her children—that was the same before and after the act of theft. The decisive part was obviously played by fear: it was that which changed her from a law-abiding citizen to a thief.

And practical, clinical experience in dealing with the actual moral difficulties of men and women warrants the bald statement that there is no known form of sin which may not have fear as its root. Pride, lust, drink, self-assertiveness, cruelty and dishonesty are not all, and always to be explained in terms of wilful perversity or a debased conscience. Often at the heart of these things lies an experience which once smote the soul with terror.

Of the facility with which fear attracts parasites we have already spoken. False notions of honour, and blustering nationalism are both alike due to fear.

Had the Church maintained in its fullness the original message of Jesus, and addressed itself to the redemption of men from fear as well as from sin, it would have had in its hands the key to the solution of much of the problem of sin.

It would, finally, have found its attitude to the world and the attitude of the world to itself radically changed, and changed for the better. So long as the religious message is couched in terms of sin and goodness, it is apt to seem the message of good people to bad—it is, to put it shortly, under a permanent temptation to Pharisaism, and only with difficulty does it keep this side of it.

That is, in fact, the impression which much Christian propaganda has made on the "non-religious" man. Nor is the feeling wholly without foundation. There is abroad in the Churches to-day a much humbler and healthier spirit—indeed, it is almost only among Christians that one finds any confession of having made mistakes in the past, and of having been guilty of sin. But it has not always been so. In prayer meetings one has not infrequently

heard prayers which made one almost shudder at the expression of an implied sense of superiority to men and women outside the Church, and, not infrequently, one still finds traces of resentment at the suggestion that the difference between the Christian and the "unbeliever" is nothing much to boast about.

The situation would have been completely transformed had the Church addressed itself to the problem of fear, for then its message would have been much more an invitation to share a gift of God. The offer of deliverance from sin would have been set in a larger context which would have freed it from any taint of moral superiority and have made unmistakable the fact that the preaching of the message was prompted by sheer goodwill—by love.

Because that element of fear in human life and of man's need of deliverance from it was lost sight of when the Church was half merged in the political community, the brand of artificiality, of remoteness from full reality, was put upon its message and teaching. It made it possible to coin the horrible phrase "the passion for souls" as a substitute for a real "passion for men", and so it perpetuated the divorce of religion from actual life and set Christianity in a wrong psychological relationship to the ordinary man.

Worse still, it permitted the Church, against the clear teaching of Jesus, to accept as the normal form of community, society based on coercion and self-interest. Henceforth the Christian was thought to be compelled to express his Christianity within the limits of that society, and to make use of the means and methods which secular community prescribed to him. To put the matter shortly, so long as the early Church kept its consciousness of being a separate community, it maintained with greater or less success its distinctive Christian witness, e.g. as Dr. C. J. Cadoux has shown, its witness against war was clear; with

the waking of that sense the witness was blurred and when the dividing line between Church and State was done away with, it was almost wholly lost. Henceforth the Christian was implicated as a citizen in the State's decision to go to war. The wheel had turned full circle, and the faith which began by believing in the omnipotence of love found itself committed to the violence and brutality of war.

It is the fact that, to begin with, Christianity found itself compelled to come to terms with political community, and that the organization of political community has always, until recently, been in advance of every other form of organization of society, joined with the fact that Christianity itself was only half committed to real life as it is actually lived, which is to a large extent responsible for the acquiescence of the Church in the existence of organizations of community which are in truth its sharpest contradiction.

During the Middle Ages the economic organization of community was relatively unimportant and imperfect at best, and for the greater part of the existence of the Church it has been the political organization of community with which it has had to deal. It got into the mental habit of seeing only the problem of adjustment to the political community.

The movement toward political democracy and the movement toward the deliberate organization of industry are, broadly speaking, contemporary. When, therefore, political democracy was achieved the Church's historic pre-occupation with political community allowed it to feel a false satisfaction and to blind itself to the fact that within the forms of political democracy, an autocratic organization of community, i.e. the economic, was taking place and gaining power. The Church, therefore, was content with the achievement of political democracy.

and, indeed, so was the average man. Both spoke of the community as a democracy.

But, clearly, we are not so. Society is democratic only in its politics, not in its industry. We are but half a democracy—nay, rather less, for the modern State's need of money to carry out its vast enterprises means that the efficient economic organization of community is all-important for its well-being. Ultimately, therefore, those who control the wealth of the community have in their hands an enormously powerful lever with which to influence the State, and something like the situation which arose between Parliament and King in the seventeenth century, has arisen in our own day between Big Business and Finance on the one hand, and the State on the other.

Increasingly, the concern of the State is with economic affairs and they form one major element in determining its foreign policy. It is this enormous power which autocratic industry can exert over the modern State which warrants the description of modern community as being a political democracy controlled by an economic autocracy, or, if "controlled" be too strong a word, "modified" by it.

To the realistic analysis of the true situation the Church has been insensitive because, throughout its history, its main concern has been with the political organization of the community as a State: once the State had become democratic, therefore, it was possible for a Church which was only incompletely realistic in its attitude to life, to accept without misgiving the achievement of political democracy, as being in fact, the attainment of democracy, true and complete. It was therefore possible for the Church to be uncritical of the fact that community was in reality vitiated by an autocratic, and since it was autocratic, an un-Christian principle of community.

One last effect of the merging of the Church in the

community must be noticed—the whittling down of the Christian ideal and aim. Throughout the Middle Ages the Church never abrogated its claim to give law to the law-givers, in other words, to declare what ought to be the secular aim of the community. Yet it is not too much to say that from the first the Church was driven to compromise. When the classic formulation of Christian sociology was made by Aquinas the Christian idea of the true community as expressing love or goodwill almost entirely disappeared, and its place was taken by the Aristotelian-Stoic ideal of community as based on distributive justice.

For eight centuries that conception of the end and basis of community has dominated Christian thinking on the subject. And when the doctrine of evolution came to be applied to community it made room for the formulation of a pseudo-scientific, but essentially secular, doctrine to the effect that not until the community of justice was established could the community of goodwill be established. Justice, established if necessary by violence, was the schoolmaster to bring community to Christ. Once more the wheel had come full circle, and the Christianity which began as an affirmation that justice could only be guaranteed by love ended by asserting that love could only be guaranteed by justice.

In still another respect compromise was made with the Christian ideal, though its full effect was only felt after the Protestant Reformation. The demand that industry should express goodwill was surrendered and in its place was substituted the same idea of justice. The characteristic quality of the Christian in business, therefore, was honesty, and honesty was exalted as the Christian virtue par excellence in business, an idea which holds good even to this day. Hence sprang the Christian doctrine of the stewardship of wealth. If a man had made his money

honestly, without cheating or defrauding his neighbours, then he was to use it for the glory of God. Not until recently have we realized that to speak so is to give away the very essence of the Christian principle, that money is not made in a fully Christian way if the getting of it has meant the exercise of autocratic power or the appropriation of the purely economic profit arising from industry.

And just as the State's need of wealth has given enormous power to industry, so the Church's assumed need of wealth to carry out its schemes has obscured the true teaching of Jesus about wealth. Modern Christians, as a matter of fact, do not dread the coming of wealth. It does not keep them awake at nights, whilst the fear of poverty, on the other hand, not infrequently does so. Very often indeed one hears economic prosperity naïvely spoken of as a special mercy of God—"God has been good to me in my business", the inference being that God had not been good to others who have not so prospered. Thus completely have we distorted and inverted the plain sense of the Gospels.

Protestantism, in truth, did but foster tendencies which were inherent in the tradition it received from the Church of the Middle Ages. In Lutheranism the divorce between religion and community becomes complete. Religion was piety, plus acts of charity, and to the State was left the regulations of the laws of society. Calvinism made the experiment at Geneva of creating a Holy Community in which the laws of God should be obeyed both in industry and municipal life. But the experiment did not last long, nor indeed was the community organized according to specifically New Testament principles. The main legacy of Calvinism, so far as the achievement of community is concerned, derives from the fact that, accepting the fundamental spiritual individualism of the Middle Ages, it interpreted the New Testament in an abstract fashion.

It saw that the New Testament called for vigour and initiative, and it produced a vigorous type of individual who believed that he was truly serving God in his business or commerce. It was all too easy for such a temper to transform and lose itself in sheer commercial pushfulness.

The English inheritors of the Calvinistic tradition, the Puritans, saw the real problem and, ecclesiastically, they separated themselves as religious organizations from the political community. They desired to create a Holy Community in the midst of a worldly society, but working as they did with the individualistic and "spiritual" conceptions of community they had inherited, they could only attempt to create a holy Church whose members were still, so far as the political community allowed them to be, members of the civil community. Puritanism remained an essentially 'religious' movement because it failed to recognize that the teaching of Jesus implied that the Church was to be a community in the full sense of the term, and not merely a religious fellowship. Sober, thrifty, energetic and industrious, the Puritans were the backbone of the industrial class, and when the application of machinery to industry and the organization of labour made possible a great increase of wealth, the Puritan tradition in industry had created an atmosphere and tone in industry which could exploit the new possibilities to the full. So the great industrial era in this country found itself working side by side with a form of religion which had no effective religious standards by which the development of new industry could be tested and judged. So long as a man was upright, he fulfilled the one demand of righteousness on the business man. Religion had only to do with private life and morality, and with the spiritual concerns of the individual—to industry it had nothing to say except, "Be honest".

The fact that during the last years of the eighteenth

century and at the beginning of the nineteenth, the mathematical group of sciences was in the ascendant, gave to the formulations of economic 'law' an apparent validity and rigidity which in fact they did not and do not possess. Industrialists and Christians alike were persuaded that there were such things as immutable and eternal laws in economics which could not be altered or tampered with. The economic system was written in the books of Nature, of God, and as such it must be respected.

With that semi-mathematical formulation of economic law, industry broke the last ties that bound it to religion. It could and must live by its own principles and was subject to no moral criticism. Such moral criticism was irrelevant. Business was business and religion was religion, and the only terms on which the two could live together was to respect each other's province.

So religion became more and more an individual and 'spiritual' concern completely insulated from the market and the council-chamber. There was the world of God and the world of affairs, religion had to do with the former; politics and industry with the latter. The divorce was complete.

For now three-quarters of a century a new temper has been growing in the Church. The early Christian Socialists under Maurice and Kingsley, the influence of the Anglo-Catholic revival, and, in the Free Churches, the revived study of the Gospels under the leading of the new critical scholarship, have created a new conscience concerning social issues in the Christian Churches.

Taken broadly, their effects have been rather in the direction of reforming existing institutions than radical criticism of their moral bases, or constructive thought concerning the positive principles of a new Christian order of community.

Yet when all this has been said, it still remains true

that for the overwhelming majority of Christians industrial and political affairs are still held to be secular concerns. Religion has to do with man's individual relationship to God and with God's to him. It is concerned specifically with sin and man's redemption by God from it. Human nature is still artificially split in two for all such. Worship, prayer and piety have to do only with man as he faces God; they have nothing to do with the group and organized relationships of men one to another. It is an affair of Sundays, and perhaps of a few minutes at the beginning or end of the day, but it ceases to be relevant—save in the one matter of honesty—to the most important affairs and actions of life. So long as man is at his office, factory or shop, a religion which asks for love and goodwill is out of place.

On the mantelpiece in the drawing-room in a certain house there is a Mills' bomb, a relic of the War. Is that not a parable of the fate which has overtaken Christianity? Born for revolutionary warfare, it has become a decoration; meant for struggle, its chief function now is to please; Anatole France is reported to have said in a mood of bitter self-criticism, "I have spent my life twisting dynamite into curl-papers." Whether it was true of Anatole France or not, when we compare the rebel faith of Jesus with the timid, acquiescent message characteristic of the Christian Church to-day, it is true of Christianity. We too have twisted dynamite into curl-papers.

CHAPTER VII

REBEL RELIGION

It is time to end this covenant with death, for covenant with death it is. The covenant is indeed already determined, and its end is in sight, for with the advent of Communism something new has entered into history which was never there before, and that something is the achievement of a community which is embodying much of the Christian ideal in practice. The principles of "each for all and all for each", of service, of regard for personality have been embodied in a definite community, and in all the life of that community. For the first time since the advent of political democracy we have a community of one texture throughout.

It is therefore no longer possible for Christian thinkers to take refuge behind the assertion that, having regard to the unredeemed human nature out of which any community must be made, we have the best possible community under the circumstances. To argue that true community will only be possible when the individual has been transformed—the favourite Christian argument to account for the slowness of social progress—is to fly in the face of the facts, for the community is there before our eyes. The great significance of the Russian experiment lies precisely in this, that it has shown the enormous power exerted by community on individual morality, nor should its obvious poverty blind us to its reality.

And clearly conventional Christianity can have no quarrel with Communism on account of the methods which have been employed to create the community, it cannot hold up its hands in horror at the river of blood

which has been shed. For a Christianity which is based on the assumption—as official Christianity would seem to be—that in international affairs violence employed to establish justice is legitimate, can hardly refuse the same plea to those who are concerned to establish justice between classes. The only defence it could offer against the doctrine of the legitimacy of class warfare is that national community is the normal, stable and final form of community, and this, as we have seen, is precisely what Jesus in the end denied. It is indeed a defensible contention that of the two—international warfare and class warfare—the latter is the more legitimate. It has at all events to do with real human rights and real human wrongs and not with “impersonal” national honour, “places in the sun”, etc.

If we have to choose between greater and less legitimacy in the employment of force, therefore, it would seem that the greater belongs to class warfare, and that in justifying international war the Christian *ipso facto* provides an even stronger argument for class war. In adopting a ‘secular’ theory of social evolution the Christian cuts from under his own feet any ground he might have for opposing Communism; he disarms himself. He cannot judge the methods by which the system has been established, he can judge only the system itself.

Nor has he any right to introduce into the argument extraneous factors such as are often introduced, i.e. the obvious poverty of Russia. We are not now thinking of the fact, too patent to be denied even by its opponents, that the standard of life is rising, and that already the Russian workman enjoys a standard of life higher than any possessed by his forebears; rather, the point to be noticed is that Russia ‘started from scratch’, so to speak, and that therefore for some years poverty was bound to be a real element in the situation.

The sole question for the Christian concerns principles. "Is Communism a truer expression of Christian principle than our own Western civilization?" That is the one question at issue on which alone judgment has to be passed. The one point at which the question of poverty is relevant is that it gives an edge to the question: "Do we prefer to be poor with Christ—if Communism be Christian in its principles—or wealthy without Him?"

There can be no doubt as to the answer which a detached observer who knew the teaching of Jesus would give; in its major principles of community, Communism, as an order of society, is the most Christian form of society we have yet had and is far more Christian than our own.

In any case, the eyes of the world of workers are turned on Russia and the Russian experiment has lighted fresh hopes in the hearts of men who have almost come to despair of ever finding in Western civilization that true liberty to be himself which is every man's birthright. The issue can hardly be overlong delayed. Either our present civilization must give way to one which is a true and complete democracy, or the rising tide of human hope and determination to create a new society in the interests of the vast mass of the common people, must be crushed under a new and thoroughgoing discipline. Either industry must approximate to political democracy, or political organization of the community must capitulate to the economic.

That is the real struggle, and whether we like it or not the struggle is taking place. We cannot stop short of either logical conclusion—either complete democracy or the complete abolition of democracy.

And for the Church, the counsels of prudence and honour point in the same direction. If the Church shows itself to be committed to the present régime, with the

overthrow of that régime, the Church itself will be overturned, and the judgment of the people will be the judgment of God.

For Christianity a point of honour is involved. What Jesus stood for was a real community of equals whose standards of prosperity were personal and not impersonal, whose bond was service, whose foundation was goodwill, whose scope was international and whose method was love. Christianity, therefore, is by its nature committed to the cause of the democratic movement; if it is true to its own genius and loyal to its own Founder, it stands squarely with the vast mass of the toilers of the world. These away, it parts with the very principles of its own being; it lies under the wrath of God; it becomes savourless salt, "fit for neither the land nor for the dunghill, but men cast it out". And St. Matthew adds, as though to emphasize man's contempt for an organization which either does not know its own function or is too timid or too time-serving to be loyal to it—"and it is trodden underfoot of men".

It is not merely the world which is passing through a time of crisis, of judgment, but the Church also is being judged of God, and the judgment passes, not on theological orthodoxy or correct observance of religious forms and ceremonies, but on obedience and loyalty. The Church, like the individual, is only preserved and only abides in the love of Christ so long as it keeps His commandments.

We must declare ourselves rebel against every autocracy seeking impersonal ends of whatever form it may be found. More, we must declare ourselves rebel against any interpretation of community in general, and of religion in community in particular, which means an artificial splitting up of personality into spirit and body. We have to declare that what God has joined man cannot part

asunder, that what affects spirit affects body and what affects body affects spirit, that what has to do with man has to do with God, and what has to do with God has to do with man. We have to recover, in a word, the integrity, the wholeness of the Christian message.

Such recovery of integrity means, of course, a frank confession of penitence that we have so partially interpreted our own message in the past, and it implies no less that in the future we set ourselves steadily against all forms of evangelism which would persuade men that they can get right with God without a radical revolution in their relationships both with individuals and with the whole of the organization of community. To that point we shall have to return a little later on.

Similarly, we shall have to refuse to separate as we have done the individual and the community, and declare that for Christians, whatever has to do with personality has to do with community, and that what has to do with community has also to do with personality. We shall have to give up the half-truth, half-lie, which has so easily blinded us to our social task, that only redeemed individuals can create that redeemed community, and be realistic enough to recognize that a community organized on Christian principles can do very much to create moral personality.

That means, in turn, the recovery of another aspect of the integrity of the Christian message. We must bring back into the Christian message the recognition that it has to do with fear as well as sin, and that the Incarnation and the Cross have as much redemptively to do with the one as with the other, and that, therefore, every organization of community which creates fear is contrary to the Christian revelation of the Will of God. We must, in a word, be rebel against all presentations of the Christian task and the Christian experience which have not as their

background God's concern for the creation of true community.

We must suspect all forms of evangelism—especially if they be financed by wealthy laymen or -women—which try to insulate God and Man from the concerns of community and dub matters of social righteousness, secular. That is a form of religion which puts God in an almost complete moral vacuum, asserts that God is related to the world only through individuals and not through the society which, humanly speaking, is God's instrument in shaping their life and controlling their thought.

The most dangerous enemy of religion is not atheism, or agnosticism, but half-religion, and the first foe which has to be conquered is not the secularism outside the Church but the secularism inside it, the secularism which relegates the market-place and the council-chamber to the realm of simply material concerns. For such division of the personality of man into spirit and body has its own reaction on the life of the Church itself. The material aspect of life with which religion is said to have nothing to do, and which is overtly denied, is only repressed, not destroyed, and being denied explicit expression in religion finds distorted and illicit expression. Hence comes the stress on members, on statistics, and the measuring of the strength of the Church by the social prestige it carries and by the 'pull' it can exert on so-called practical affairs. Questions of quality tend to sink into the background and standards of numerical and financial success to take their place. A 'good' church is one with a large membership and which has no difficulty in meeting its financial obligations. Until we do away with secularism in the Church we cannot deal effectively with the secularism outside it. The 'box-office' theory of religious success must go.

All this is tantamount to saying that the emphasis in the

Church's own message needs to be shifted. In an earlier chapter we have seen that Jesus does not seem to have been interested in the 'religious' process itself. He was not unduly concerned about 'conversion' but He *was* concerned about 'discipleship', about practical obedience to Himself and His teaching. Yet it is apparent that it is the former aspect of religion which is the dominant concern of modern religion. For the 'strait gate' of obedience of which Jesus spoke, they have tended to substitute the straight gate of conversion. The drift towards setting up a typical 'conversion' experience as the beginning of the Christian life is unmistakable. Yet the plain teaching of the Gospels is that whilst Jesus did say bluntly that conversion was necessary: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven"—He did not say a word about it until after the disciples had been with Him some time, and indeed, had apparently been out on at least one, possibly two, missionary campaigns. It is that word 'disciple' and not 'convert' which He stresses, and for Him clearly the heart of religion lay not in an emotional experience but in a moral decision of the will.

If our 'evangelism' is right, then Jesus never said any of the right things. He never sought to win men to Himself by pointing out how sinful they were; He made no mention of an atonement for sin only in any form. His question was always stark and direct: "Will you follow; will you obey?" It was ruthlessly practical, and the assurance of faith would only come by way of loyalty. St. John only gathers up what is implicit in the Synoptics when he makes Jesus say: "If any man will to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be true or no."

Certainty is born of obedience. Faith is the practical committal of life to Jesus, not to any belief about him,

His work, or His person. It is that severely practical note which the Church must recover, just as it has been the want of it which has constantly betrayed the Church. Too often, to quote a phrase of Principal Oman, we have been busy turning disreputable publicans into respectable Pharisees and have amazingly confused priggishness with true piety.

Further, such emphasis on conversion has not infrequently stultified itself. We have been satisfied when men have been 'converted' and once they have "come over the line" we have imagined that all that was necessary to be done had been done. The result is that the young convert has often been flung back into the maelstrom of business life, with its accommodations and its compromises; he has resisted them at first, but afterwards has surrendered to them bit by bit, and because he does not like to feel that he has slipped back, clings all the more desperately to great words and phrases which were true of him in his initial experience, but are no longer true. He talks as though God were as real to him at the later stage as He was at the earlier, as though he were as wholly devoted to Him as he was ten, twenty, or thirty years ago.

The result is, first of all, a 'staling' in religion, and secondly, unreality, and not infrequently, as we have said above, an emphasis on a pseudo-spiritual religion which keeps it as far as possible from contact with the fullest and most real life of man. The stress upon conversion, in a word, tends to perpetuate a religion that is half real at best, and which, because it is only half real, is a distortion of true and authentic Christianity.

From all that we should have been saved, if the keyword of our faith—discipleship—had been kept from the beginning, if we had simply asked men in His name: "Will you follow, will you obey?" "Will you risk everything on the assumption that His way of living is the one

true way of life and community?" Until the Church starts where Jesus did, with a question, whose answer implies a conscious and deliberate committal to a definite way of life, and puts into that phrase "Way of Life" all that He puts into it in the way of its implications for community, there will always be an element of unreality in its practical faith.

And such a question would cut very deep; it would demand the most complete self-sacrifice and the largest and most complete trust. For the question would simply be the interrogatory form of the unequivocal demand of Jesus, "Whosoever would come after me, let him say 'No' to himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me"—it would simply be, "Are you willing to say 'No' to yourself?" "Are you willing to take up the cross daily?"—i.e. to live every day as if in that day you were going to be crucified? "Are you willing to live a completely selfless life for God and the community?"

Such questions pierce down to the very marrow of life and touch it at its most vulnerable and vital spot, and nothing is plainer than that they challenge radically the cardinal assumptions of the current practice of many Christians. Yet, if we are to be true to the teaching and methods of Jesus, we dare put no question less searching, or which makes a lower demand.

And such a question, or series of questions, clearly makes the largest demands on human trust. To believe that life abundant comes by the denial of self, that it is truly filled only as it is utterly emptied, is to affirm the greatest of all paradoxes, and the completest of all apparent contradictions. Faith could go no further: it strains trust to its uttermost limits. Yet such is the true primary Christian demand. Its first call is for man to outlive the world in selfless love, and to outdare it in trust.

Such a faith makes religion a real adventure of the whole man instead of an adventure of the emotions and the intellect. It bids men do and dare in the world of affairs and not simply make tentative experiments in the world of private and semi-private relationships.

And Jesus offers only one warrant for such bold decision. God is a God who cares, cares as the early Church rightly saw, to the point of giving Himself to the uttermost. That is the deep meaning behind the Johannine phrase: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." The Cross was the supreme embodiment of the divine love; it made men realize as nothing else could, "the breadth and length and depth and height of the love of God".

Nor was the faith of Jesus simply that men would rest quietly and passively in the love of God and in the assurance of His watchful guardianship. He could not have spoken of the necessity of bearing the cross, as He did, if the love of God guaranteed men immunity from hurt or danger. The thought goes much deeper. God was always willing to give the individual His Kingdom, in a word, to share with him His own Love and Power, and it was in that Divine Life and Power at work within Him that the disciple would live.

That meant the possibility of that true purgation of self which, as we have seen, was His first demand on men, and it meant further that the selfless life would be one of inward victory. Neither the turbulent world of instinct within, nor the dubious world of circumstances without, would be able to "get him down". He would be match for all the inward and the outward foes of the good life, triumphant over pain and death. In that triumphant life, regardless of what was happening to him and sure that he was "able to do all things through Christ", he would be

able to give himself joyfully, unreservedly and without stint to doing the will of Christ.

And part of the spiritual impotence of the Church lies in the fact that in this supreme spiritual adventure we have never taken Jesus at His word. We have but half dared; we have but half surrendered. We have kept a sneaking belief that what we had to do was to offer God the mould into which our personality was cast at its birth; only a very few have dared to offer God the mould itself, that if need be He might break it and make it afresh. When we are honest enough to admit that the latter alone is the true beginning of the Christian life—and not until then—we shall recover the spiritual dynamic and drive we need.

It may be that if we press such a demand on men it will mean that the Church will become a much smaller body so far as counting heads is concerned: it may mean that many who are now staunch adherents of it will feel that henceforth they have no place in it and that few will come forward to join in its membership, but on any truly spiritual view of life, loss of size does not necessarily mean loss of power—on the contrary it may mean an increase in it. Nothing is more fascinating in the Science Museum at South Kensington than the engineering models displayed on the ground floor, and to study their evolution is an education in spiritual possibilities. One sees the early models of stroke and piston engines, huge, cumbersome and unable to use efficiently all the power they generate. With the coming of the turbine all that is altered; the same power is generated by an engine only a fraction of the size, whilst a turbine which takes up considerably less room than the older type can generate vastly greater power. So it may be with the Church. A smaller Church which knows its business and is aware of the terms on which alone membership in a true Christian

Church is possible, might well exert an enormously greater influence than the flaccid, uncertainly-speaking Church as we know it to-day.

It is in this conception of the enormous possibilities opened up to the individual by a selfless devotion to God expressed in selfless endeavours to create the Holy Community, that we find a mark which sharply distinguishes Christianity from Communism. For if Christianity has remembered the importance of sin and forgotten the importance of fear, Communism has stressed the importance of fear and minimized that of sin. For Communism, sin is a by-product of social conditions; remove the conditions and the sin will cease. And Communism has indeed proved that an alteration of material conditions may release moral energies hitherto penned up and forbidden expression.

But Christianity can accept no such thorough-going optimism concerning human nature as is implied in the theory. There, at all events, the Christian is more realistic than the Communist. He does not believe that habits and practices arising out of age-long instincts are to be eradicated and their power exorcised in so summary and facile a fashion, and the Christian cannot help reflecting on the history of his own Christian movements. Many a Christian movement has begun in as great—if not greater—glow of moral enthusiasm as has the Communist experiment, and in all too short a time the original glow has faded and the old vices have begun to reassert themselves when the new movement has well established itself. As a rule, traces of such a fall from grace begin to show themselves as early as the third generation, possibly even the second; by the fourth generation they are unmistakable.

Christianity believes that the act of sin is much like the act of sight—we see only because of the objective fact

which originates the rays of light, which in turn impinge on the eye, and the organizing capacity of the mind itself. So with sin. The external conditions which are the occasion of sin are only half the explanation; the other and equally important half is within the man himself.

At the moment, as so often in the past, the enthusiasm of creating a new order of society has captured the whole interest and attention of the Russian people and given again—as so often before—a false sense of permanent moral achievement. But the Christian cannot help asking whether his own history will not repeat itself in the history of Communism, and whether, the primary impulse of the new communal adventure once past, the old instincts of self-assertion, pride and greed will not reassert themselves. For its own sake, it would seem that unless Communism is to find itself committed to a permanent policy of repression, it must come to terms with the reality of sinful impulses in the soul itself.

It is only by the moral release which Christianity offers and provides, and with the sense of moral possibilities still to be achieved that Communism can really deal with the problem of human nature as it is, or move forward into constantly finer expressions of its own essential principle. Communism must find a spiritual basis for its material practice, and Christianity must find a material expression of its faith in God. Without these Communism is likely to be numbered amongst the many social experiments which have had a brief flush of moral glory and then withered away, and Christianity will be but a barren fig-tree, full of leaves, but no fruit thereon. Each possesses the element which alone can make the other fruitful.

But most important of all, it is essential that we make up our minds concerning the essential function of the Church, concerning its primary task and its fundamental relationship to secular community. If our analysis of the

teaching of Jesus in Chapter III is right, then there can be no doubt as to what that function is. It is, to put it in terms of social biology, the bearer of the principle of the evolution toward true community, i.e. the principle of goodwill.

Any given principle can only carry the evolutionary process a certain distance forward, and when that point is reached, the evolutionary process moves forward only in those organisms which either express or adapt themselves to a new quality or element. At different stages of the ladder on which life mounts upwards towards its goal a new factor comes into play, and it is in response to and in the expression of this new factor that life is carried a stage higher. The dawn of mind, of self-consciousness, of conscience, of spirit, all represent fresh starts in the development of organic life.

So is it we believe with the evolution of society. The principle of justice based on law and force has carried the evolution of community a certain, considerable distance, but its work is done. Jesus instituted the Christian Fellowship to be the carrier of the new principle of love, and there is no reason for its existence as a community save to fulfil that function. It was intended to represent a higher form of organization of society. It cannot, therefore, be fitted into a political community or subdued to it, and we must be rebels against any interpretation of Christian fellowship which makes the assumption that the true form of community is the political, that the Church is that community on its religious side, or which makes the Church simply a constituent group in it. This would appear to mean the frank acceptance by Christians of the principle of *Limited Citizenship* in the political community.

The limitation would obviously act in two ways—in what a Christian can ask from the community and what

he can give to the community. His citizenship will be limited in what, as a member of a community based on goodwill, he can ask from a community based on coercion. He cannot, for instance, ask that in time of war his safety should be ensured by the use of the methods, means and instruments of war. Equally he cannot exploit to the utmost of his ability the economic organization which, as we have seen, is frankly based on coercion. He must, in a word, limit his demand upon it to what is necessary for the discharge of his duty as a Christian citizen.

In the same way he will feel himself limited in what he can give to the State. He will not feel that he can employ sub-Christian methods prescribed by the State to remedy a situation which has arisen out of the outworking of sub-Christian principles. When the State feels that it must go to war, the Christian will feel that for him to share in the employment of violence is to betray the essential principle of the higher community, the Christian Fellowship, to which he belongs, and to which he believes he owes supreme loyalty. To believe that political community is a higher form of society than the Christian Fellowship, and that therefore it has an overriding claim on Christian loyalty is the arch-heresy, and it is that confusion of loyalties which is the source of most of the ambiguity and confusion in Christianity about war.

But the community to which he owes loyalty must be a true community and not an occasional fellowship. It must work out in its own organization and life the principles which it asserts must be embodied in a true community, and it must work them out in the same areas of life. The Church cannot give orders to the world unless the orders come out of its own experiment and experience. It has no right to say to the world, "Go", but only "Come" or "Follow". It must work out the principles

which it demands should be applied to industry, first of all in its own life. It must, to put the matter boldly, become an economic brotherhood itself, before it can ask secular community to change its basis from compulsion to goodwill. The word must be in spirit and in power—in action—not talk about an economic order of goodwill, but its demonstration in practice.

To that we believe we are being driven as Churches; to the creation and working out within the Christian organization itself of an economic order based on the equality of all, concerned primarily with the human welfare it subserves, in which each member serves the whole and the whole serves the well-being of each.

No conception less bold than that, we believe, will either serve the turn of the Church or the need of our modern world.

Finally, the Church must define its relationship with the secular community. The policy of the permeation of secular society by Christian individuals is as we have seen, not more than a part of the hope of Jesus; He seems to have trusted more to the demonstration of the Christian spirit actually embodied and working in a full and true community, the Christian Fellowship.

In the same way we have seen that the Church cannot accept the political categories of equality, inferiority, and superiority as adequately defining its relationship with society. The only category which can truly define the relationship must be found in religion itself; it is the category of redemption, of love, of goodwill, of whole-hearted selfless service. Into all that really represents a co-operative effort in modern social life, the Christian will fling himself and all his capacities.

From that point of view the developments which have taken place in modern community are of enormous significance, for within the framework of community based

on force there have grown up what we may call the nuclei of a truly co-operative commonwealth.

A simple illustration will make our meaning clear. A hundred years ago every house had its own supply of water. During the century the community discovered that it could not afford that some of those wells should be impure, and that the good of the whole community could be served by the co-operation of all, with the result that nowadays practically all communities, except the very smallest, have common supplies of water.

In the spheres of health, education, the provision of unemployment relief and in several others, the principle of co-operative action, is thoroughly established. Into such services the Christian can fling himself without any reserve; he will take hold of them and seek to extend the area of co-operation successively to other fields. And wherever there is human need the Church will carry on with new thoroughness its ancient task of doing the ambulance work of the world. From first to last, in its own corporate organization as a visible testimony, and through the work which individual Christians perform, its work will be redemption and its attitude redemptive.

None can doubt, however, that if the Church so acts, its own inner structure will be changed so as to be almost unrecognizable. It will become a series of relatively small groups, working and living together in equality, all of them deliberately limiting their standard of life; the work of the priest or minister will be changed out of all recognition—it may disappear almost entirely—and its social prestige will disappear.

Above all, if such a Church dares to avow frankly that it stands without equivocation for the rights of the at present dispossessed, that both in politics and economics its weight will be thrown into the scale against autocracy and arbitrary exercise of power through wealth, and that

it cannot and will not sanction war, many of the privileges it now enjoys will be lost to it. When God is brought into the market-place the Church must go into the cockpit, and it will stand a fair chance of being honourably hated for His name's sake by all who cling to the present order of society.

Such a Church, harried and persecuted, and maybe driven from pillar to post, will continue to demonstrate and to declare that only in obedience to the will of God can nations find either peace or prosperity. It will be "troubled on every side, but not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed"; and always in its ears will ring the presage of final victory, "Fear not, little flock. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world".

Yet the severest opposition the Church will have to meet will not come from without, but from within; its bitterest foes will be those of its own household. We may be sure that those who exercise political authority or economic power will not readily yield up the enormous prestige which comes from a religious sanction of their practices and privileges. And the Churches at the moment would seem to be committed to the existing order of things. The Anglican Communion is expressly related to the State and largely as well to the economic organization of community; the Free Church Communions are, it is true, not committed to the State, but their organization involves the substantial support of the middle classes, who are the main buttress of the present economic régime; and it would appear, therefore, that indirectly—and because indirectly and indefinitely therefore more dangerously—the Free Churches are committed to our present economic organization. If the Church takes the line of action we have indicated and dares to declare that it stands for an entirely new

order of economic and political life, it will take its life in its hands. It will have to fear not merely the loss of wealth, but even more, the rivalry of the re-formulation of religion by such groups. Their wealth and prestige will be used to popularize and perpetuate a conception of religion which insulates spirit from body and carefully bars the bringing of religion to bear in the council chamber and the market-place.

It is foolish to blind our eyes to the fact that we are moving rapidly towards a new Reformation cutting right across the frontiers of the existing Christian communions and based this time, not on doctrine, but on the eternal implications of our faith. And as was the case with the older movement, all the wealth, influence and authority of those already in possession will be used to discredit, and if possible to destroy, the new Protestantism.

Yet if the Church does awaken from its lethargy and take seriously its own gospel, it will almost inevitably—as it has been in the great revivals of the past—be driven in the direction of something like a spiritual Communism. The story of the early Church of Jerusalem, the Franciscan movement, the Anabaptist movement in Münster, to name only three examples, are sufficient evidence to show where Christianity leads when the attempt is seriously made to put the New Testament ideals into practice. Such primitive sharing of goods, a communism of consumption, broke down because it was incomplete. To-day those conditions are changed. For the first time it is possible not merely to share goods, but to produce them together, and it is in that direction that the Church will be driven.

The beginning will have to be made in the local Christian community in a much completer sharing of the resources of life on the part of the wealthier with the poorer members of the community. It will become intolerable to the Christian conscience that one member of a

church should have all that heart can desire, whilst another member of the same church drags out a miserable existence in a single room in the basement of a tenement. But inevitably that stage must lead to the next, the organization of common and co-operative work. Each local Christian community will become an economic unit, and in the end we shall have both a national and transnational congeries of such units. So the Church will present to the world, not an arbitrary fiat as to what the world must do to fulfil the will of God, but the demonstration of the word in deed and in fact. For the time being the Church may, will have to, put its own existence to the hazard, but in that very hazarding of its life, it will find it. That is the real Christian challenge to-day. It asks men to believe that in forswearing their own advantage and in putting all their capacities at the disposal of God for the creation of true community they will find a peace that the world can neither give nor take away, the very blessedness and joy of Christ.

Nothing, we are persuaded, can for long postpone the decision. The world's need is so sore and its inner tension so acute that revolution of some kind is inevitable. And there are only two alternatives—the revolution of violence and the revolution of love. That is the real crisis which is being determined, and a Church which set itself resolutely to be the kind of society which its Founder intended it should be, could decide the issue. By its visible life and its peace, by its fellowship and its sober simplicity it could redeem the world.

